





R.B.Hannen



A SHORT HISTORY OF  
PURITANISM

"For now Nonconformity [Puritanism] in the days of Edward was conceived, which afterwards in the reign of Mary (but beyond sea at Frankfort) was born ; which in the days of Queen Elizabeth was nursed and weaned ; which under King James grew up a youth or tall stripling ; and towards the end of King Charles's reign shot up to the full strength and stature of a man, able not only to cope with, but conquer the hierarchy, its adversary" (Fuller's *Church History of Britain*, Book VII., Cent. xvi. 23).

# A SHORT HISTORY OF PURITANISM

*A HANDBOOK  
FOR GUILDS AND BIBLE CLASSES*

BY

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## P R E F A C E

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THE preparation of this Handbook was undertaken at the request of the Board of Management of the Young People's Guild of the Irish Presbyterian Church, and with the express sanction of the General Assembly.

So far as the writer is aware there is in existence no short history of Puritanism, nor anything that would serve as a handy or easily accessible text-book on the subject. It was for that reason, and because some knowledge of the history of that great movement is essential to a proper appreciation of both the civil and religious history of these kingdoms, and of some of the most vital elements in our national, social, and family life, that the present work was written. The period covered by this record embraces some of the most momentous, interesting, and stirring passages in English history. The one source of regret to the author is that the necessity of condensing within text-book bounds the account of a struggle extending over so wide a field and comprising events fraught with such vast and far-reaching issues, compelled him

to omit much which he should have liked to embody in his treatise ; and indeed a larger book would have been easier to write.

The appearance of this volume at this moment is opportune in another respect. The celebration of the Quatercentenary of the birth of John Calvin is to be held next year. Now the Puritan movement, strictly so called, began at Frankfort and Geneva, and was not only an immediate fruit of Calvinism, but one of its most widespread, permanent, and influential consequences. The present volume, which records its history in England, may, therefore, be regarded as a contribution towards that Commemoration.

Of course such works as Neal's voluminous *History of the Puritans*, Marsden's *History of the Early and Later Puritans*, Fuller's *Church History of Britain*, Burnet's *History of the Reformation*, Collier's *Ecclesiastical History of Great Britain*, and many other Histories both general and special, have been constantly consulted, including Strype's *Annals*, his *Life of Archbishop Parker*, and other *Lives*; but it will be apparent to the reader that wherever it was possible, especially for the Elizabethan period, the author has gone to such sources as the *Original Letters*, the *Zurich Letters* and other Documents published by the Parker Society, and has given his own judgment on persons and events.

COLLEGE PARK, BELFAST,  
*July 1908.*

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PURITANISM

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INTRODUCTION



## INTRODUCTION

### IS THE HISTORY OF PURITANISM WORTHY OF OUR STUDY ?

DOES the history of Puritanism deserve and is it likely to repay our research? Have we not in this advanced age of ours got far beyond the stage at which the principles for which the Puritans contended are either interesting or urgent? Are not most of the questions which moved earnest religious men so profoundly in the time of Elizabeth, and in the time of James, Charles, and Cromwell, questions of the past, obsolete as the ichthyosaurus or the dodo, without any close or vital bearing on the problems of modern life? On the contrary, the fundamental principles which were then in debate are still alive, practical, and importunate.

**1. A Question between Evangelical Religion and Sacerdotalism.**—The question at issue between the Puritans and their opponents was primarily a question between evangelical religion and sacerdotalism, between the Christianity of the New Testament and mediævalism with its pagan ceremonial excrescences; the latter were inseparably connected with the papal

idea of priesthood, and with the papal system, and their retention would, in the judgment of the Puritans, tend to foster and promote it; and that too was the hope of devoted Romanists themselves. “An they but sup our broth they will soon eat our beef” was the saying of Bishop Bonner. The history of the Anglican Church has been a constant verification of that remark. The issue thus raised by the Puritans is still a living one.

## 2. A Struggle for Moral and Social Reform.—

Puritanism aimed at a *moral and social* as well as a religious reform. While jealous for the rights of men, it was not less insistent in reminding them of their duties and responsibilities. The uncompromising foe of despotism, it was also the determined enemy of vice and social disorder. It brought the individual face to face with God and with His law, and taught him to submit to Him as Supreme Sovereign;<sup>1</sup> and by a system of firm discipline it sought to bring the law of God home to the community. Any one who knows what Geneva was before Calvin began his labours there, and to apply his system of discipline, and what it soon became, and long continued to be, cannot but be amazed at the change; and Geneva was the cradle of Puritanism for England, as well as for Scotland, France, and the Netherlands. The

<sup>1</sup> The dominant idea of Puritanism, according to Professor Dowden, was that “the relation between the invisible spirit of man and the invisible God was immediate rather than mediate” (*Puritan and Auglican*, p. 11).

main object of the Puritans in their effort to set up the Presbyterian order was moral and disciplinary. If they looked around them, as M'Crie points out in his *Annals of English Presbytery*, they saw the benefices possessed by pluralists and non-residents who fleeced the flock while “the hungry sheep looked up and were not fed”; if they looked into the churches, they saw a non-preaching clergy, often loose-living, mumbling the service, with the aid of clerks who could not read, to a people who could not spell nor write their own names; if they surveyed the parishes of England, they seemed like an untended, unweeded garden; and it was because they felt persuaded that the Presbyterial polity was not only scriptural, but held out the promise of a preached gospel, a faithful discipline, a working clergy, and an intelligent, moral, and religious people that they were so anxious to have it put into operation.

“The Protestant movement was saved from being sunk in the quicksands of doctrinal dispute” (says Mr. Mark Pattison, quoted by Mr. John Morley) “chiefly by the new moral direction given it at Geneva. The religious instinct of Calvin discerned the crying need of human nature for social discipline. . . . It was an attempt to combine individual and equal freedom with strict, self-imposed law; to found human society on the common endeavour after moral perfection. The Christianity of the Middle Ages had preached the base and demoralising surrender of the

individual—the surrender of his understanding to the Church, of his conscience to the priest, of his will to the prince. . . . The policy of Calvin was a vigorous effort to supply what the revolutionary movement wanted—a positive education of the individual soul. The power thus generated was too expansive to be confined to Geneva. It went forth into all countries. From every part of Protestant Europe eager hearts flocked hither to catch something of the inspiration. . . . This, and this alone, enabled the Reformation to make head against the terrible repressive forces brought to bear by Spain, the Inquisition, and the Jesuits. Sparta against Persia was not such odds as Geneva against Spain. *Calvinism saved Europe.*"<sup>1</sup>

**3. Puritanism stood for Constitutional Government.**—It is acknowledged by historians generally—it is a fact too patent to be denied—that immense advantages to civil and religious liberty were won by the Puritans, wrung from the Tudor and Stuart despotisms, and at length embodied in the British Constitution at the Revolution Settlement; so that an interest attaches to the Puritan struggle which is deep and permanent. Referring to the age of Elizabeth, Hume, in his *History of England*, says: "So absolute was the authority of the Crown at that time that the precious spark of liberty had been kindled and was preserved by the Puritans alone; and it

<sup>1</sup> See article by Mr. John Morley, now Lord Morley of Blackburn, in *Nineteenth Century* for February 1892.

*is to this sect that the English owe the whole freedom of their Constitution.*" At all the great critical stages in the history of the struggle, as we shall see, the Episcopal clergy preached the doctrine of non-resistance, and upheld the royal prerogative and the most tyrannical exercise of the kingly power. They "were never weary of repeating," says Macaulay, "that in no conceivable case, not even if England were cursed with a king resembling Busiris or Phalaris, with a king who, in defiance of law, and without the pretence of justice, would daily doom hundreds of innocent victims to torture and death, would all the estates of the realm be justified in withstanding his tyranny by physical force."<sup>1</sup> The Puritans, on the other hand, both wrote and struggled for constitutional government. They sought to have the representative principle of their own Church government reproduced in the government of the State. And how Presbyterianism worked itself into the British Constitution is very well shown by Dr. J. F. Bright in his *History of England* (p. 538). When Henry Grattan said in the Irish Parliament, "The Presbyterian religion is the mother of the free Constitution of England," he was stating a simple historical fact. "Under the watchwords of faith and duty our English liberties were won; and however much the forms of Puritanism may have fallen into decay, it is certain it is under the same watchwords alone that they will be preserved as a heritage to our children," says Mr. S. R.

<sup>1</sup> Macaulay's *History of England*, vol. i. chap. ii.

Gardiner.<sup>1</sup> "It saved Scotland," says Green in his *Short History*, "from a civil and religious despotism, and in saving the liberty of Scotland it saved English liberty as well." "In the revolution of 1688 Puritanism did the work of civil liberty which it had failed to do in that of 1642 . . . slowly but steadily it introduced its own seriousness and purity into English society, English literature, English politics. The whole history of English progress since the Restoration, on its moral and spiritual sides, has been the history of Puritanism."<sup>2</sup> But its influence has gone much farther than England. "He that will not honour the memory and respect the influence of Calvin knows but little of the origin of American liberty," says Bancroft, the historian of the United States.<sup>3</sup> "In Calvinism lies the origin and guarantee of our Constitutional liberties," says Groen Van Prinsterer, the great Dutch jurist.<sup>4</sup>

**4. It Defeated the Spanish Armada.**—The preparation and invasion of the Spanish Armada were but an episode in the great life-and-death struggle between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism in Europe, an outcome of the policy of the League for the extermination of Protestantism. How was it defeated? How did England rise to such predominance as a sea-power?

<sup>1</sup> *History of England*, vol. ii. pp. 487, 489.

<sup>2</sup> *Short History*, chap. viii. sec. 10, p. 604.

<sup>3</sup> *Literary and Historical Miscellanies*, pp. 405 et seq.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted by Dr. Kuyper in his *L.P. Stone Lectures on Calvinism*, p. 99.

One of the main purposes of Froude's last book, *The English Seamen in the Sixteenth Century*, is to show this. Down to the time of the defeat of the Armada, the sovereignty of the sea belonged to Spain. Yet within the space of an ordinary life, these insignificant islanders had struck the sceptre from the grasp of the Spaniard, and placed the ocean crown on the brow of their own Sovereign. How did it come about? Froude asks. What Cadmus had sown dragon's teeth in the furrows of the sea for the race to spring from who manned the ships of Elizabeth, and carried the flag of their country round the globe? And Froude answers: "The English sea-power was the legitimate child of the Reformation," and in particular the child of Puritanism. "The force, the fire, the enthusiasm of the movement" that ended in the defeat of the Armada, and in establishing the naval power of England, he says, "came from the Puritans, from men of the same convictions as the Calvinists of Holland and Rochelle, men who, driven from the land, took to the ocean as their natural home, and nursed the Reformation in an ocean cradle" (p. 9).

**5. Its Influence on the Home.**—But the service of Puritanism to the Constitution and the nation is not more noteworthy than its influence on the *family and the fireside*. "Home as we now conceive it," says Green again, "was the creation of the Puritan. Wife and child rose from being mere dependents on the will of husband or father, as husband or father saw in them saints like himself, souls hallowed by the touch

of a divine Spirit, and called with a divine calling like his own."

**6. It Produced Strong Men.**—Puritanism has produced great, brave, strong, noble men—"men," as Froude has it, "possessed of all the qualities which give nobility and grandeur to human nature." "Grapes," he adds, "do not grow on bramble bushes." In this world there is nothing so priceless as character, and there is nothing more certain than that the Puritan faith was able to build up firm, strong character, upright and pure, to inspire it to noble aims, to heroic endurance of suffering, to heroic resistance against wrong, to deeds of heroic achievement. The Puritan age was the heroic age for England. Many of the best, and not a few of the greatest names on the roll of English history, are the names of Puritans. Among her divines Puritanism can count men like Cartwright and Travers, Howe and Owen and Sibbes, and Baxter and Bunyan. In statesmen like Cecil, Lord Burleigh, Sir Francis Knollys, Sir Francis Walsingham, and the still more illustrious Lord Bacon, who advised that the arrangements of the Church should be modified to suit their wishes;<sup>1</sup> in great patriots and Parliamentarians like Sir John Eliot, John Pym, and John Hampden; in powerful rulers and consummate generals like Cromwell, the Puritans had warm sympathisers and defenders. Immortal poets like Spenser and Milton sang their praise, and there is convincing

<sup>1</sup> See Hallam's *Constitutional History*, chap. vi. note, and Spedding's *Bacon*, vol. iii. p. 105.

evidence that even Shakespeare was brought up in a Puritan household.

**7. Social Standing, Education, and Culture.**—And yet there is probably no set of people who have played such a notable part in history whose real history is so little known. They waged a long and intense conflict with determined and bitter foes. The representations in our common histories respecting them are taken chiefly from deeply prejudiced enemies, who assailed them with all the rancour of political and religious hatred, and to whom it was psychologically impossible to depict them truly. Even popular modern historians, like Macaulay and Green, who freely recognise the inestimable service they rendered to civil and religious liberty, are so much out of sympathy with their religious sentiments that some of the pictures they have drawn of them are little better than caricatures. Froude, as a rule, has a true appreciation of them.

By people who ought to know better they are often represented as rude, uncultured Philistines, inimical to the fine arts, given to turn the faces of their pictures to the wall. Such a conception of them is no doubt derived from certain later grotesque developments of the religious character in the time of the Commonwealth, caricatured by Butler in *Hudibras*. But to take such fantastic products of fanaticism as a fair specimen of the great body of the Puritans is simply to betray a lamentable lack of information. All through the times of Elizabeth, James, and even Charles I., the Puritans were really the more educated

classes of the time, abounded in the universities, and gave them some of their most distinguished scholars. For a very long period the great majority of the members of the English Parliament were Puritan. How was the Parliament of that age composed? It was made up chiefly of the landed gentry of England, and of the leading members of its best families. "It may startle some readers," says Hallam, "to be told that the Puritans had a majority among the Protestant gentry in the Queen's day. It is agreed on all hands, and it is quite manifest, that they predominated in the House of Commons. But that House was composed, as it ever has been, of the principal landed proprietors, and as much represented the general wish of the community when it demanded a further reform in religious matters as on any other subject."<sup>1</sup> It is not too much to say that a large proportion of the best blood, the wealth, the education, the culture of England during the long period referred to was to be found among the Puritans. Did these men turn the faces of their pictures to the wall? Were they lacking in the refinements and amenities of life? Many of them were recognised as among the most refined and cultivated gentlemen of their time.

Professor Dowden shows that Matthew Arnold misconceived the essential character of Puritanism; that "the more enlightened Puritanism contained within it a portion of the spirit of the Renaissance"; that "among the Puritans were not a few men and

<sup>1</sup> Hallam's *Constitutional History*, chap. iv. note.

women who added to purity of morals and the happiness of domestic affections, guarded as sacred, the best graces of culture and refinement.” The Puritan gentleman, he points out, “might be a scholar, a lover of music, a lover of letters. Cromwell’s chaplain, Peter Sterry, who was an adviser in the purchase by the State of the books from Ussher’s collection, was a lover of the work of Titian and Vandyke. We remember the early home of Milton, the house of a London scrivener of Puritanic faith and habits, where the father would join in madrigals of his own composing, and the boy by his father’s desire, and through his own passion for learning, would remain till midnight busy with his poets of Greece and Rome, and his French and Italian studies. It was of a Puritan divine, Thomas Young, that Milton afterwards wrote: ‘First, under his guidance, I explored the recesses of the muses, and beheld the sacred green spots of the cleft summit of Parnassus, and quaffed the Pierian cups, and, Clio favouring me, thrice sprinkled my joyous mouth with Castalian wine.’” “A Puritan strain has entered into much that is most characteristic in our literature. It is present in ‘Samson Agonistes,’ in the ‘Vision of Sin,’ the ‘Palace of Art,’ the ‘Idylls of the King’; in the poetry of the author of ‘Dipsychus,’ and the poetry of the author of ‘Christmas Eve and Easter Day’; in the prose of *Sartor Resartus*.<sup>1</sup>”

<sup>1</sup> *Puritan and Anglican*, by Professor Dowden, pp. 4, 14, 21.

"We must not picture the early Puritan as a gloomy fanatic," says Green. "The religious movement had not as yet come into conflict with general culture . . . the lighter and more elegant sides of the Elizabethan culture harmonised well enough with the temper of the Puritan gentleman. The figure of Colonel Hutchinson stands out from his wife's canvas with the grace and tenderness of a portrait of Vandyck. His artistic taste showed itself in a critical love of paintings, sculpture, and all liberal arts, as well as in the pleasure he took in his gardens, in the improvement of his grounds, in planting groves and walks and forest trees. If he was diligent in his examination of the Scriptures, he had a great love for music, and often diverted himself with a violin, on which he played masterly."<sup>1</sup>

"The proposal for the organisation of pleasure, its recognition and development with government aid, came not from courtier or cavalier, but from the Puritan Milton" (Dowden).

**8. Defects and Blemishes.**—Like all human beings, and all sections of humanity, the Puritans had their defects and blemishes; and it would be no real service to their memory to conceal or extenuate them. Cromwell preferred to be painted with his wart. Perhaps their most fundamental theological fault was that they were disposed to import too much of the Old Testament dispensation into the New. It was a strong tenet of theirs that the judicial laws of Moses

<sup>1</sup> *Short History*, chap. viii. sec. 1.

in all their details are binding upon Christian princes. There was one matter in which they fell behind Calvin. In his chapter "Of Christian Liberty" in the *Institutes* Calvin teaches that Christian liberty consists of three parts: 1. in freedom from the law as a means of justification before God; 2. in the loving, spontaneous obedience of the justified; and 3. in that we are not bound before God to any observance of external things which are in themselves indifferent, but are at full liberty to use or omit them. Marriage, for example, is neither commanded nor forbidden; each one is left to himself to decide whether he will marry or not; but this is only one of a multitude of matters which belong to the category of the *adiaphora*, or indifferent, which are neither commanded nor forbidden, in which Calvin includes "all ceremonies of free observance." Calvin lays great stress on it as an important part of Christian liberty to maintain our freedom in such things. It is singular that a man of such keen intellect and large knowledge as Cartwright failed to recognise the teaching of the Apostle Paul with regard to such things, and in opposition to it laid down the principle that "what is not commanded is forbidden," and so exposed himself to the easy refutation of Hooker.

There was another error which they shared in common with all the earnest men of their time, whatever their religious views were. The principles of toleration were not yet recognised or acted on as they now are. It was not yet dreamt of by any

religious party that men holding different religious opinions, and observing different forms of worship, might agree to differ, and might live together in peace and amity in the same country. Each imagined it to be his duty to coerce all his fellow-countrymen to accept what he believed to be the truth.

Of course, the Puritans, like all classes of human beings, had their faults and failings, which in a great degree belonged to the time in which they lived. The late Mr. Lecky lays down a weighty maxim which we would do well to remember: "The men of each age must be judged by the ideal of their own age and country, and not by the ideal of ours."<sup>1</sup>

**9. Still a Living Force.**—Nor should it be forgotten, finally, that in its essence Puritanism continues to be a living, operative force among men. Wherever the English language is spoken to-day, wherever English and Scottish, and Scotch-Irish men have found their way over the wide world, there Puritanism has its visible memorials in churches and institutions innumerable, and in its potent influence on domestic and social life. It was this type of religion which, beyond any other, formed the character and moulded the institutions of the great American republic, and inspired their struggle for independence; and the vast bulk of her population to-day are in essence of the same faith. Full of vigour, energy, and enterprise, a large proportion of the people who have taken possession of our colonies are of the same staunch stock; while as

<sup>1</sup> *Value of History*, p. 50.

missionaries they have gone to all lands. Referring to the great Puritan ejection of 1662, the late Mr. W. E. Gladstone asks : "What became of the partner ejected from the firm?" And he answers : "The old English Puritanism has largely passed, on a widened scale, and with features mitigated, but developed and enlarged, into the modern English Non-Conformity. . . . After the ejectment from the National Establishment, it travelled through a period of declension. But it has since developed throughout the British Empire, in the United States, and in heathen lands, into a vast and diversified organisation of what may be roughly termed Evangelical Protestantism, which, viewed at large, is inclusive of the Presbyterian churches in Scotland and elsewhere; which has received a large collateral accession from the movement of Wesley, and which exceeds in aggregate numbers, and perhaps in the average of religious energies, the old Lutheran and Reformed communities on the Continent. It may be estimated moderately at one-tenth of the entire numerical strength of Christendom; it depends almost entirely on the voluntary tributes of Christian affection; and it has become a solid inexorable fact of religious history which no rational inquirer into either its present or its future can venture to overlook."<sup>1</sup>

But enough has been said to show that the great movement which we designate by the name of Puritanism is well deserving of our study. Its spirit

<sup>1</sup> W. E. Gladstone in *Nineteenth Century*, July 1888.

has entered deeply into our national life and history. It has not only given depth and intensity to religion, and breadth and freedom to our Constitution, and strength and ardour to our patriotism, it has profoundly coloured and affected our highest and best literature. If to the ‘spacious’ age of Elizabeth, and the ‘iron’ age of Cromwell the epithet ‘heroic’ has been justly applied, we owe it mainly to the Puritans. To appreciate the most powerful moral influences which have shaped and moulded the character of the English and Scottish people and their sons throughout the world, to reach and realise the sources of our complex civilisation, is quite impossible without a thoughtful study of the history of Puritanism.

## BOOK I

### **PURITANS PRIOR TO THE RISE OF THE NAME**



## CHAPTER I

### ORIGIN OF THE NAME ‘PURITAN’

**1. Froude’s Error.**—In his *English Seamen in the Sixteenth Century* Froude remarks that the earliest mention of the name ‘Puritan’ which he had noticed was in a document of the year 1585. The document referred to was a paper drawn up by a Jesuit called Parsons, and prepared for the special use of the Pope and Philip of Spain, to inform them of the reception which an invading force was likely to meet with in England. “The only party,” the Jesuit says, “that would fight to the death for the Queen, the only real friends she had, were the *Puritans*, the Puritans of London, the Puritans of the sea-towns.” Froude adds (p. 8), “it is the first mention of the name which I have found.” A very singular confession to be made by so widely read an historian as Froude. It is quite certain that the name was in current use at least twenty years earlier than 1585.

**2. The True Date given by Fuller.**—In so well known a work as his *Church History*, Dr. Thomas Fuller traces the earliest use of the term ‘Puritan’ to the year 1564. Referring to that year, he says,

"The English bishops, conceiving themselves empowered by their canons, began to show their authority in urging the clergy of their dioceses to subscribe to the Liturgy, Ceremonies, and Discipline of the Church, and such as refused the same were branded with the odious name of Puritans, a name which, in this nation, first began in this year." The terms 'Precisian,' 'Puritan,' 'Presbyterian' are all employed by Archbishop Parker in his letters about this time as nicknames for the same party.<sup>1</sup> Some ten years later the name appears to have come into common use. The Elizabethan Puritan; Dr. Thomas Sampson, writing to Bishop Grindal in 1574, protests vigorously against the use of the opprobrious epithet. "Unjustly to impose this name on brethren with whose doctrine and life no man can justly find fault," Sampson says, "is to rend the seamless coat of Christ, and to make a schism incurable in the Church, and to lay a stumbling-block to the course of the Gospel, and woe to the man by whom the offence cometh."<sup>2</sup> The designation, as may be gathered from the words of Sampson, was exceedingly distasteful to those to whom it was originally applied, but, just like the terms 'Christian,' 'Lollard,' 'Methodist,' the titles which were at first employed in derision, and warmly resented, soon came to be worn as a decoration and a crown.

<sup>1</sup> See Strype's *Parker*, ii. 40; Strype's *Parker Records*, xcix. iii. 331.

<sup>2</sup> Strype's *Parker*, Appendix, xciv. iii. 322.

**3. The Early Puritans all Presbyterians.** — It should be noted, too, that at first, and for a considerable time, the name of Puritan was applied exclusively to Presbyterians, and that in fact the terms 'Presbytery' and 'Presbyterian' came into use about the same time. In the sentences immediately succeeding that which has just been quoted from him, Fuller describes those designated 'Puritans' as "inveighing against the established church-discipline, accounting everything from Rome that was not from Geneva, endeavouring in all things to conform the government of the English Church to the Presbyterian Reformation"; and John Robinson, who has been called "the father of the Independents," and whose name is famous in connection with the story of the Pilgrim Fathers, says, "The Papists plant the ruling power of Christ in the Pope; the Protestants in the bishops; the Puritans in the presbytery; *we* put it in the body of the congregation of the multitude called the Church." Robinson here distinguishes the Puritans from his own party, the Independents, whom afterwards they were regarded as embracing, and makes government by presbytery a distinctive mark of the early Puritans. Other names given to them at the time to which I refer were 'Disciplinarians' and 'Consistorians,' and, when the object of their opponents was to be specially contemptuous, 'Genevans' and 'Allobrogians.' The title 'Independent' came into vogue considerably later—about the year 1609.

**4. Their Distinctive Principles.**—As to the distinctive principles of those designated ‘Puritans’ or ‘Presbyterians,’ we have a brief account of these in a letter written by Bishop Sandys to Henry Bullinger of Zurich in 1573. As the Puritans had not yet given any formal statement of their principles, some allowance must be made for possible misapprehension on the part of Bishop Sandys on some points. He describes them as “seeking the complete overthrow and rooting up of our whole ecclesiastical polity” and as “striving to shape out for us I know not what new platform of a church. And you would not imagine with what approbation this new face of things is regarded as well by the people as the nobility.” He then proceeds to give a summary of their views thus:—

“1. The civil magistrate has no authority in ecclesiastical matters. He is only a member of the church, the government of which ought to be committed to the clergy.

“2. The Church of Christ admits of no other government than that by presbyteries; viz. by the minister, elders and deacons.

“3. The names and authority of archbishops, archdeacons, deans, chancellors, commissioners, and other titles and dignities of the like kind, should be altogether removed from the Church of Christ.

“4. Each parish should have its own presbytery—[what we now call ‘session’].

"5. The choice of ministers of necessity belongs to the people.

"6. The goods, possessions, lands, revenues, titles, honours, authorities, and all other things relating either to bishops or cathedrals, and which now of right belong to them, should be taken away forthwith and for ever.

"7. No one should be allowed to preach who is not a pastor of some congregation ; and he ought to preach to his own flock exclusively, and nowhere else.

"8. The infants of papists are not to be baptized.

"9. The judicial laws of Moses are binding upon Christian princes, and they ought not in the slightest degree to depart from them."<sup>1</sup>

Bishop Sandys adds that "there are many other things of the same kind," and that "these good men are crying out that they have all the reformed Churches on their side." What these Puritans desired was to have the government and discipline of the church, as well as its doctrine, conformed as far as possible to the principles found in Scripture.

<sup>1</sup> *Zurich Letters*, vol. i. p. 249, Letter cxiv.

## CHAPTER II

### MEDIÆVAL PURITANS

**1. ‘Things Ancienter than their Names.’**—Hooker says that “with all names this is usual, that inasmuch as they are not given till the things whereunto they are given have been some time first observed; therefore generally things are ancienter than the names whereby they are called.”<sup>1</sup> There were Christians before the disciples were called Christians at Antioch; there were reformers before the Reformation; and in like manner there were ‘Puritans’ before this name came to be applied to them. I have now, as briefly as may be, to notice some of them—teachers who in the mediæval period held and disseminated some of the radical principles which at a later time were characteristic of Puritanism.

**2. Mediæval Puritans Considerable in Number.—**

There were not a few, indeed, who in the course of the Middle Ages had knowledge and insight enough to penetrate through the accumulations which the course of centuries had heaped upon primitive Christianity, and who recovered and restated more or less

<sup>1</sup> *Eccles. Polity*, bk. vii. chap. ii.  
26

fully what they regarded as the original teaching of our Lord and His Apostles, and so anticipated many of the most radical of the Reformed and Puritan doctrines. From among these, however, I can only single out two leaders, and briefly outline their teaching, as conspicuous examples of the Puritan spirit and doctrine in the age in question—I refer to Marsiglio of Padua and John Wyclif. A brief sketch of the followers of Wyclif, the Lollards, may be added.

#### SECTION I.—MARSIGLIO OF PADUA

It is singular how little recognition Marsiglio has had in modern Church histories; yet his name is eminently worthy of being remembered with special honour. Born at Padua in 1270, he studied under William of Ockham at Paris, where he became a teacher of medicine, philosophy and theology, and rose to be Rector of the University.

**1. Conflict between King and Pope.**—The power and prestige of the Popes had greatly declined during the years of their residence at what the “Good Parliament” called “the sinful city of Avignon,”—the period known as that of the Babylonish captivity (1309–1377),—but their claims over State as well as Church, over kings as well as their subjects, were as arrogant as ever. A fierce conflict broke out between Pope John xxii. and Louis of Bavaria, King of the Romans. It was in fact a continuation of the feud between the Ghibellines and the Guelfs, between the

friends of the feudal and imperialist idea and the friends of the Catholic idea of a general federation under the supremacy of the Pope. As the prophet of the Ghibelline ideal, Dante wrote his great work *On Monarchy*, in which he maintained against the claim of the Papacy that the emperor derived his authority immediately from God—a book which Bryce, in his *Holy Roman Empire*, says proved “an epitaph rather than a prophecy.”

**2. The “Defensor Pacis.”**—It was in 1324 that Marsiglio (with some assistance from John of Janduno) gave the world his famous work *Defensor Pacis*, or Advocate of Peace. The title indicated the purpose of the book, which was to make peace between the Church and the State by defining the natural limits of each. Dedicated to Louis, whom it powerfully defended in his struggle with John xxii., it was an epoch-making book. A special bull was issued against it by the Pope; and when, at the beginning of the Reformation, it was translated into English it was placed in the list of “prohibited books.” About a couple of years after its publication Marsiglio took up his abode in the Court of Louis, remaining with him as his physician, adviser, and literary defender.

**3. Its Teaching.**—Almost for the first time Marsiglio’s treatise applied a scientific criticism to history. As Gregorovius says, it “illuminates the whole history of the hierarchy” by its penetrating research into the rise and growth of the papal pretensions. Inspired, no doubt, by both Dante and

William of Ockham, Marsiglio pushed their principles much further than they did. With rare insight and great boldness and courage he advanced the radical principles of reform advocated later by Wyclif, Huss, and the Reformed leaders in the sixteenth century. He laid down the fundamental axiom that the Canonical scriptures are the sole authority in matters of faith ; they alone are infallible. The infallibility of the Pope he repudiated. Nay, he assailed the very foundations of the Papacy, denying not only its temporal but its spiritual authority. Christ, he said, had not appointed any head of the Church as His representative. Peter had no greater power than the other apostles, and had not transmitted his authority to the Roman Church. It could not be proved that he was ever in Rome, much less that he was Bishop of Rome. Bishops and presbyters were originally names for the same office-bearers, and were all equal ; and bishops and pastors should be chosen by the people. To preach the gospel, to teach and warn men, and administer the Sacraments ministerially are the only functions of the priesthood. The power of the keys belongs to God, Who has vested it in the Christian people, who in turn delegate it to the priest. It is as *their minister* he exercises it : rather, he is the *announcer* not the *exerciser* of judicial authority in the Church. Excommunication belongs only to the community of believers, or their representatives. God alone can forgive sin ; absolution by Pope or priest is a delusion. A hypocrite cannot benefit by the

priest's absolution, a true penitent cannot be hurt by its being withheld. The hierarchy of Pope, bishops, and priests do not constitute the Church, which consists of the company of believers. The exclusive application of the term 'spiritual' to the clergy was warmly deprecated by Marsiglio. The supreme authority in the Church belongs to a general Council. He was perhaps the first to announce the principle that the ultimate and supreme authority in the State is in the body of the citizens: it is by virtue of the power derived from the people that kings reign and princes decree justice. This was a fundamental postulate of the Puritans. In some matters Marsiglio was far in advance both of the Reformers and the Puritans. He discards the Old Testament theocracy as a model for the Church to-day. It is not the Old Testament law (on which the Papacy was wont to base so many of its claims), but the New Testament evangelical law that we must take for our guidance, and even this is not to be enforced by temporal penalties. He disclaimed all coercive, punitive authority for the Church; this belonged exclusively to the State, and should be applied only to things commanded or forbidden by the State. Many things contrary to the laws of God must be tolerated by the State. Heresy should be punished by the State only so far as it is a violation of the laws of the State. In his grasp of the true principles of toleration, and of liberty of faith and conscience, he far transcended both the Reformers and their successors. The name

of such a noble pioneer, mostly omitted altogether in our histories, deserves to be held in everlasting remembrance.

## SECTION II.—JOHN WYCLIF

**1. Wyyclif properly bracketed with Marsiglio.**—John Wyyclif, who was the flower of Oxford scholarship in his time, can hardly have failed to be familiar with the *Defensor Pacis*. In much of his teaching he follows the lines laid down in it. In a bull issued by Gregory xi., urging the arrest of Wyyclif, after he had disseminated his views, the Pope describes those views as, “with a few terms changed, the perverted opinions and ignorant doctrines of Marsiglio of Padua, of damned memory, and of John of Janduno,” who are denounced as “two beasts from the abyss of Satan.” It is fitting thus that our sketch of Marsiglio should be followed by some account of Wyyclif, who was no less radical in his sentiments than his predecessor. In his *Life of Wyyclif* Le Bas says that “if the reformation of our Church had been conducted by Wyyclif, his work in all probability would nearly have anticipated the labours of Calvin, and the Protestants of England might have pretty closely resembled the Protestantism of Geneva. There is a marvellous resemblance between the Reformer with his poor itinerant priests and at least the better part of the Puritans.” “Puritanism,” says Thorold Rogers, “may be fairly dated from the days of Wyyclif.” It

would therefore be a grave omission to leave him out of even a brief survey of Puritans in the mediæval period.

**2. Wyclif's Birth and Education.**—The publicity of Wyclif's later life contrasts with the obscurity of his early years. Neither the date nor the exact spot of his birth is known with certainty. He was born between the years 1320 and 1330, and the hamlet of Wyclif-on-Tees, in the parish of Wyclif, in a vale of Yorkshire, claims the honour of having been his birth-place. At an early age he was sent to the University of Oxford, where he soon distinguished himself in every branch of learning, but especially in dialectics, the mathematical sciences, and jurisprudence. He became a Fellow so early as 1345. He lectured with much success on rhetoric and philosophy, and soon acquired a great reputation for scholarship, acumen, eloquence, general ability, and great elevation of spirit. In 1360 we find him Master of Balliol. In 1372 he had finished his sixteen years' course for the degree of Doctor of Divinity, and acquired the right of lecturing in theology.

**3. Becomes Chaplain to Edward III.**—By his treatises already published, by his practical sagacity and masterful handling of the great burning questions of the day, he commended himself to Edward III. and his advisers, and became Edward's chaplain.

**4. Appears as Patriot and Political Philosopher.**—The exactions and demands of the Papacy on England at this time were almost incredible. Even the

payment of the arrears of the annual tribute promised by King John to the Pope, as his feudal superior, was daringly insisted on. The King, Lords and Commons, of course, repudiated the audacious demand. It was at this crisis that Wyclif emerged into public view as a political philosopher and a patriot. Lechler thinks that he was a member of the Parliament as a Special Commissioner. That is not likely; but in a small treatise he published a masterly statement of the principles on which the King and the Parliament proceeded, and soon after there appeared his two great works, the one on "Divine Dominion" and the other on "Civil Dominion," setting forth the grounds on which such aggressions should be resisted.

**5. Sent as Royal Commissioner.**—It is a proof of the influence he had already acquired that in 1374 Wyclif was sent with others as a Royal Commissioner to Bruges to treat with Papal Commissioners with a view to adjust the differences that existed. He was here brought into close relations with the unscrupulous but powerful John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, third son of Edward III., who became his patron and protector.

**6. Comes out as a Religious Reformer.**—He now came out more boldly as a determined reformer, lecturing at Oxford, preaching at Lutterworth, where he had become rector; assailing more directly the errors and abuses of the Papacy; declaring that the true spirit of Christianity had been lost, and that it had degenerated into mere shows and ceremonies;

by the dynamite of the new ideas which he drew from Scripture shaking to its centre the colossal spiritual tyranny that enslaved Europe, and lay like a nightmare on the human mind.

**7. Practical Measures Adopted by Him.**—But he was eminently practical, and adopted further effective measures to put his ideas into circulation. He had already begun to train an order of men, who, under the name of ‘poor priests,’ barefooted, and clad in russet robes of coarse woollen cloth, were sent out by him as itinerant preachers to proclaim a pure gospel, and to whom multitudes listened with eager attention.

**8. Charges brought against Him.**—It was impossible that the new teaching could be overlooked by the papal representatives. In 1377 he was summoned by Courtenay, Bishop of London, to appear before Convocation to answer for his doctrines, but the meeting broke up in disorder. Heretical propositions were culled from his writings, and charges formulated against him, but through his powerful friends the proceedings were stayed. Instead of being intimidated by his foes, he proceeded to assail the whole fabric of the Papacy, including its inner core and citadel, the dogma of transubstantiation.

**9. A New Thing in History.**—And he now resolved on a new thing in history. He appealed directly to the common people. “By a transformation which marks the wonderful genius of the man, the schoolman was transformed into the pamphleteer” (Green). He sent forth tract after tract, overflowing with

humour and raillery against the friars, in the English tongue. The Roman chronicler complains that the tracts “budded under his pen like leaves in spring-time !”

**10. The Peasant Rising.**—The peasant insurrection under Wat Tyler and John Ball now took place. Wyclif had given no encouragement to it; but his generous, manly sympathy with the oppressed peasants stands in striking contrast with the fierce and furious ravings of Luther against the German peasants who rose in similar circumstances.

**11. Bible Translation.**—The Herculean, epoch-making, and permanently fruitful work which he now conceived and proceeded to carry out by his own labours and those of scholarly assistants, was the translation of the whole Bible into English, and placing it in the hands of the common people. Copies were multiplied rapidly and put into wide circulation. A still larger design took possession of his thoughts. It was to lead back the Church to the ordinance of Christ, and to conformity with His word—a work in which he thinks it possible that he may meet with a martyr’s death.

**12. His Death.**—But his career was nearing its close. Stormy as his noon had been, the evening of Wyclif’s life was calm and uneventful. On the last day of the year 1384 his great spirit passed to where “beyond these voices there is peace,” but not until it had “lit a fire in England which could never be extinguished.”

**13. Body Exhumed.**—The Council of Constance ordered his remains to be exhumed from consecrated ground and flung away. Forty-four years after his death they were disinterred, and thrown into the river Swift, which flows past Lutterworth. Thus, in the memorable words of Fuller, “this brook conveyed them into the Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wyclif are the emblem of his doctrine, which is now dispersed all the world over.”

**14. Summary of His Teaching.**—Only the briefest summary of his teaching can be given. He declared the Bible to be the supreme and sole standard of truth and law ; he affirmed a direct relation between God and man through Christ, the only Mediator, and that no creature can merit anything by good works ; renouncing the dogma of transubstantiation, he gave a spiritual view of the Lord’s Supper ; he advocated the right of private judgment ; he swept away the whole system of sacerdotalism, or a mediating, sacrificing priesthood, the foundation on which the mediæval Church was based, and laid stress on the priesthood of all believers ; he taught with special emphasis the doctrines of predestination and election. “By the ordinance of Christ,” he said, “priests and bishops were all one.” Prelates he describes as “tormentors of the Church,” unknown in early days, and needless in later times. “There were six superfluous orders among the clergy,” he said, “the twelve daughters of the horseleech, Satan, ever crying, ‘Give, give,’ ”

namely, popes, cardinals, bishops, archdeacons, officials, deans, rectors, priests, monks, friars, door-keepers, and questors." Already in the fourteenth century he was substantially at one with the great Elizabethan Puritans of the sixteenth century. Hence his depreciation by modern Anglican sacerdotialists, who calumniate him as a revolutionary and a communist. He and Marsiglio may well be called 'Morning-stars of the Reformation.'

### SECTION III.—THE LOLLARDS<sup>1</sup>

**1. Misrepresentations Corrected.**—Following Dean Hook, who set the fashion to high-church historians of disparaging Wyclif and his work, it has been alleged by some late writers that Wyclif's theological views "had no permanent effect," that "they died with him or even before him," that Wyclifism "fell into entire and total neglect," owing to the "communistic and revolutionary principles" which he and his followers disseminated.<sup>2</sup> In vain, however, are the facts of history ignored or distorted by prejudice. It had already been made sufficiently clear by Lechler that Wyclif's teaching was not communistic. The con-

<sup>1</sup> It is now generally agreed among scholars that the name 'Lollard' comes from the Old Dutch *lollen* or *lullen*, to sing or hum, and that it first arose in the Netherlands in the fourteenth century.

<sup>2</sup> Wakeman's *History of Church of England*, p. 152; Locke's *Great Western Schism*, p. 218, in "Eras of the Christian Church."

clusion of the most recent student of the period, Trevelyan, is: "Lollardy had no connection with socialism, or even with social revolt. We possess reports of the proceedings against scores of Lollards, the items of indictment mount up to several hundreds, yet I have been able to find between the years 1382 and 1520 only one case of a Lollard accused of holding communistic theories, and not a single case of a Lollard charged with stirring up the peasantry to right their social wrongs." The verdict of Ramsay is to the same effect.<sup>1</sup>

**2. Spread of Wyclif's Doctrine.**—And as to the assertion that Wyclif's principles died with him, a contemporary chronicler, his bitter opponent, Knighton, referring to the period between his death in 1384 and the end of the century, testifies that his sect had "multiplied to such an extent that you could scarcely meet two persons on the road, but one of them would be a disciple of Wyclif."<sup>2</sup> Allowing for considerable exaggeration on Knighton's part, it is manifest that Wyclif's followers, who were known as Lollards, were very numerous. The evidence of this supplied by Lechler and others is overwhelming. Nor was it among the common people merely that Wyclif's opinions spread. They found many adherents among the gentry of England. The Earl of Salisbury, Sir Thomas Latimer, Sir John Russell, Sir Lewis Clifford,

<sup>1</sup> Trevelyan's *England in the Age of Wycliffe*, p. 340; Ramsay's *Lancaster and York*, i. 178, 181 note.

<sup>2</sup> Lechler's *Wycliffe*, p. 440, note 2.

Sir Richard Story, Sir Reginald Hilton, Sir William Neville, and many others, helped the cause by their means and influence. At Court, the Queen Mother, the Princess Joan, and Anne of Bohemia, Queen Consort of Richard II., were favourably disposed. In and around Leicester, and over the whole county of that name—it was the county in which Wyclif resided—it is evident from the statement of Knighton, a Leicester man, that Wyclif had many followers. It was in Norwich and the eastern counties perhaps that Lollardism won its greatest successes.<sup>1</sup> But they were numerous also in the south and west. In the diocese of Worcester and Salisbury we hear of the bishops taking measures against them. They were active also in Wales.<sup>2</sup> But it was among the middle classes of the larger towns, such as London, Leicester, Bristol, Northampton, and Norwich, that the Lollards made their greatest inroads.

### 3. How the Lollards Disseminated their Views.—

As to their method of proceeding, Knighton says : “When an itinerant preacher arrived at the residence of some knight, the latter immediately with great willingness set about calling together the country people to some appointed place or church in order to hear the sermon ; even if they did not care about going, they did not dare to stay away or to object. For the knight was always at the preacher’s side, armed with sword and shield, ready to protect him

<sup>1</sup> Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, ii. 157 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> Wilkin’s *Concilia*, iii. 202-215.

should any one dare to oppose in any way his doctrine or person."

**4. Petition Parliament for Reforms.**—In 1395, through Sir Thomas Latimer, Sir Richard Story, Sir Lewis Clifford and Lord John Montague, they laid before Parliament a document, containing a statement of their doctrines or 'conclusions,' and a petition to the legislature praying for help in carrying out the reforms which they suggested—a petition which was affixed to the doors of St. Paul's, Westminster Abbey, and other churches. They say that the priesthood which began in Rome is not the priesthood which Christ ordained; that the law of celibacy is the source of grave evils; that the pretended miracle of the sacrament of the bread leads almost all men into idolatry; they condemn special prayers in the church for the souls of the dead, pilgrimages, oblations to blind crosses or 'roods,' and to deaf images of wood and stone, auricular confession, and vows of chastity taken by women.

**5. Persecutions: the Black Statute.**—The hierarchy became alarmed, and soon more active steps were taken to suppress the Lollards. Henry IV., who owed his crown to the hierarchy, lent his aid in their persecution. The first Lollard martyr was William Sawtre. He was taken to Smithfield, placed in a barrel filled with faggots, and in the presence of a great crowd he sealed his testimony in the flames—the first Englishman who chose death rather than violate his conscience. He was executed, not by statute law,

nor by common law, but under the Roman canon law. A few days later (March 10, 1401) the infamous Act *de heretico comburendo*, known as the ‘Black Statute,’ was passed, enabling the bishops to arrest and imprison the Lollards, and to hand them over to the civil officers, “to be burned on a high place before the people.”

**6. The Good Lord Cobham.**—Under Henry v. the fires of persecution still burned. Sir John Oldcastle, whose wife was granddaughter and heiress of John, Lord Cobham, and who through her seems to have obtained the title, for in 1410 we find him summoned to sit among the English barons—Sir John Oldcastle, known as “the good Lord Cobham,” the leader of the Lollards in his time, at once a scholarly and earnest man, was arrested in 1413 and imprisoned in the Tower. He managed to escape, however, and lived long in concealment. The Lollards to the number of 20,000, we are told, rose in his behalf, coming from different parts of England, but they were easily dispersed, and thirty-seven of them sent to the gallows. At length, in 1417, Oldcastle himself was captured in Wales, and “hanged by a chain of iron, and burnt up, gallows and all.” His character was caricatured by playwrights, and even Shakespeare transferred the caricature to his pages, but popular sympathy with Oldcastle compelled him to substitute the name of Falstaff for Oldcastle in later editions of his plays, and to explain in an epilogue that Oldcastle died a true martyr, and that the personage now

called Falstaff must not be supposed to represent him.

**7. Lollardism Persists to the Reformation.**—But though Lollardy was driven underground it was not exterminated. The struggle between the houses of York and Lancaster withdrew attention from it; but the burnings were resumed and went on through the fifteenth century, and in the opening of the reign of Henry VIII. were still proceeding; for in 1511 a correspondent of Erasmus tells him that wood had grown dearer in England because of the holocausts of heretics. Lollard societies still existed in Buckinghamshire and Berkshire, and in the eastern counties. One of them “before going to the stake in 1518 told his judges that he believed he had converted seven hundred persons in the course of his life.” “Wyclif and his followers,” said Erasmus, “were put down by the English kings; but they were only crushed, not extinguished.” They linked the work of Wyclif with the Reformation.

## CHAPTER III

### PURITANS UNDER HENRY VIII.

**1. An Unparalleled Revolution.**—We cannot stay to record the politico-ecclesiastical events of Henry's reign. Suffice it to say that a revolution almost unparalleled in history was effected by him. By a series of momentous enactments in which the personal will of the sovereign was the prime mover, and while as yet the mediæval doctrines of the Church remained practically unchanged, the Church in England was severed from Rome; Henry took the Pope's place as head of the Church; the monasteries were suppressed; and all who desired a return to the former state of things, as well as those who were in favour of more advanced reforms, were hanged, beheaded, or intimidated, and driven from the kingdom. It is calculated that during the reign of Henry not less than 70,000 persons were violently put to death for one cause or another. The enforcement of the personal will of the King by terrorism in every department of government was the outstanding feature of the reign. "Judges, juries, Parliament, Convocation, instead of being the guardians of freedom, became the

accomplices of the tyrant, and helped to rivet the chains on their own necks."

## 2. A Deeper Spiritual Movement and its Causes.—

The revolutionary events just referred to were due chiefly to personal or political exigencies. But contemporaneously with these violent external measures a deep spiritual movement was in progress. The movement in favour of a genuine reformation of religion was due to several causes.

(1) It had got a considerable impulse from the *Renaissance*. The most eminent apostle of the Revival of Learning, Erasmus, visited England on four different occasions, and during his abode there liberally dispensed the fruits of it. His edition of the New Testament in the original Greek, with a Latin translation and notes, did a most important service in the universities and among scholars in awakening a deeper interest in the sacred writings, and in promoting a closer acquaintance with them. Bishop Gardiner described Erasmus as "the odious bird" which laid the egg that was hatched by Luther. Men like Colet and Linacre visited the schools of Italy, and came back imbued with the spirit of the new learning.

(2) But even from the better class of 'humanists' a real or thorough reformation never could have come. *The dissemination of Lollard principles in England*, which, we have seen, was still continued, did more probably than the Revival of Learning in preparing the way for a deeper religious reform. "The smouldering embers needed but a breath to fan

them into flame," and the breath needed came from two quarters.

(3) The news of the new movement that was stirring Germany to the depths, and *the influx of Lutheran and other Reformation literature* from that country into England, gave a powerful inspiration and stimulus to the cause.

(4) But co-operating with the ferment of thought and feeling generated by Lollardism, and quickened by the news from Germany, was the splendid work done by Englishmen themselves in *the translation of the Scriptures into the English tongue*, and in the circulation of the new ideas which they started—a work in which the leading and largest part was taken by William Tyndale.

**3. William Tyndale.**—Tyndale was born in 1484 at North Tibley on the banks of the Severn, southwest of Gloucester. Sent early to Oxford, he made rapid progress, especially in classical studies under Grocyn and Linacre. He is mentioned also as a favourite pupil of Colet. It was at Oxford that he began what proved to be the great work of his life—the study of the New Testament—and drew other scholars around him for the deeper perusal of it. From Oxford he passed to Cambridge. Just before he arrived the Greek New Testament of Erasmus had appeared. It must have been a great joy to him to find other scholars of kindred spirit with his own already engaged in the study of it, and basking in the light of it. One of these was Thomas Bilney,

to whom it had been like ‘the dayspring from on high,’ giving light to those that sit in darkness and the shadow of death. 1 Tim. i. 15 especially was the means of giving not only light to his mind, but peace and joy to his heart. And Bilney was the first link in a remarkable chain of influence. He was the means of opening the eyes of Latimer, Latimer of Ridley’s, and Ridley of Cranmer’s. The author of *Ecclesia Anglicana* describes Bilney as “a gloomy and half-crazed Puritan,” meaning that he was not a high-church man. He was burnt in the market-place of Norwich in 1531.

Another congenial spirit whom Tyndale found at Cambridge was John Frith, whom he was instrumental, according to Foxe, in bringing to a knowledge of the truth. Frith, who, like Tyndale himself, imbibed the more advanced views of the Swiss reformers, wrote a treatise against the Romish doctrine of the Mass, showing that in the Lord’s Supper Christ is partaken of, not corporeally, but spiritually, and by faith. The book was of sufficient importance to call forth a violent reply from Sir Thomas More, who said that Frith’s book contained “all the poison that Wycliffe, Tyndale, and Zwinglius had taught concerning the blessed sacrament of the altar; not only affirming it to be bread still, as Luther does, but also, as these other beasts do, that it is nothing else.” But More’s somewhat truculent logic of the pen it was found necessary to supplement with the more effective logic of the stake. Frith was arrested,

thrown into the Tower, tried and condemned, and burned at Smithfield in 1533.

**4. Tyndale Accused of Heresy.**—But we return to Tyndale, who left Cambridge in 1519, and became tutor and chaplain in the family of Sir John Walsh, who resided at Sodbury Hill, overlooking the vale of the Severn where Tyndale was born. But here too the Greek New Testament was his constant companion. The new ideas which he learned from it he expressed freely in conversation with the local abbots, deans, and others whom he met at Sir John Walsh's table. He had the opportunity, too, of ventilating them when he preached in the church adjoining the manor-house, and in churches in the neighbourhood of Bristol. Accused of heresy before the chancellor of the diocese, he was summoned to appear at a conference of the clergy. The charge against him was that he taught what afterwards became the fundamental principle of Puritanism, namely, that whatever is not in Holy Scripture, and cannot be proved thereby, no man should be required to believe as an article of faith. The charge was not persisted in. But the great idea of translating the Bible into the language of the English people had already taken possession of him; and it was about this time that he said to a Roman Catholic divine, “Ere many years, if God spares my life, I will cause the boy that driveth the plough to know more of the Scriptures than thou dost.” He had already, in fact, entered on his great task.

**5. Repairs to London.**—But in order to obtain better means and facilities of doing it he went up to London. It was about the beginning of 1523. He hoped to receive encouragement and help in his work from Tonstall, the Bishop of London, distinguished as he was for his classical learning. Recommended by Sir John Walsh to Sir Harry Guildford, the King's Comptroller, and by him to some clergy, he began to preach in St. Dunstan's. He preached salvation by grace through faith in Christ. He wished to become the bishop's chaplain, but the bishop received him coldly. He, however, made the acquaintance of a rich merchant called Humphrey Monmouth, who invited Tyndale to live with him, supplied him with books, and laboured with him at the translation of the Bible. But troubles threatened. "I understood at the last," he says, "not only that there was no room in my lord of London's palace to translate the New Testament, but also that there was no place to do it in all England." His kind patron supplied him with means to carry out his purpose.

**6. Sails for Hamburg.**—In 1524 he sailed for Hamburg, and there he translated and had printed the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, and sent them to his friend Monmouth. From Hamburg he went to Wittenberg, and had an interview with Luther. Thence he repaired to Cologne, where the translation of the New Testament was completed, and was being printed, when a Roman Catholic divine called

Cochlæus discovered what was going on, and Tyndale had to flee, with the sheets already printed, to Worms, where at length he succeeded in having printed two editions of 3000 copies each. Through the zeal and enterprise of English merchants and various friends of his, the volumes were carried into England in bales of merchandise, and through numerous zealous agents put into wide circulation.

**7. His Bible sold by Royal Authority!**—Cardinal Wolsey and his bishops burnt basketsful of them at St. Paul's; and in 1530 they were ordered by the King in Council to be burned in St. Paul's Church-yard; but it was announced at the same time that it was the King's purpose to have the sacred writings translated by "learned and Catholic persons." Meanwhile, Miles Coverdale, a friend of Tyndale and an earnest advocate of the reformed doctrine, had translated the Bible from the Vulgate, with the help of Luther's German translation, and dedicated it to the King, who permitted it to be circulated; and in the following year, 1537, Matthew's Bible, which really consisted of Tyndale's New Testament, and the Old Testament as far as Chronicles, with the other books taken from Coverdale, was approved by the King, "set forth with the King's most gracious licence," and its sale forced upon the clergy. It was to all intents and purposes Tyndale's work sold and circulated by royal authority! 'Thomas Matthews' was simply a pseudonym for William Tyndale.

**8. His Puritan Sentiments.**—Settled at Worms on the Upper Rhine, Tyndale was in close intercourse with the Swiss reformers, and was in thorough sympathy with the doctrine of the Reformed Church. In his translation of the New Testament his Presbyterian sentiments, in fact, found expression. In his *Practice of Prelates*, which appeared in 1530, he affirms that “the covetousness of prelates was the decay of Christendom,” and in answer to the question “what officers the apostles ordained in Christ’s Church?” says that “the apostles, following and obeying the rule, doctrine, and commandment of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, their Master, ordained in His Kingdom and Congregation *two officers*, one called after the Greek word ‘bishop,’ in English an overseer, which same was called ‘priest’ after the Greek, ‘elder’ in English. . . . Another officer they chose, and called him ‘deacon’ after the Greek, a ‘minister’ in English, to minister the alms.” Tyndale was, in fact, like many others in the time of Henry VIII., a fore-runner of the Puritans, of whom we shall hear again. His friend Coverdale was a man after the same type.

**9. His Tragical End.**—The end of the earnest scholar’s career was very tragical. Efforts had been made to induce him to return to England. He felt keenly his exile from his native land, and longed greatly to return, but knew that by so doing his life would be in peril. He kept moving from place to place, labouring with unwearying diligence at his translation of the Old Testament. In 1535 he was

being entertained in the house of an English merchant at Antwerp, when he was betrayed by an agent of the English King, carried to the castle of Vilvorde, and imprisoned there. For more than twelve months he was kept a prisoner, but continued at his work of translating the Old Testament. He was then condemned to death as a heretic. “He was tied to the stake; and then first strangled by the hangman, and afterwards with fire consumed on the 6th of October, 1536, crying with a loud voice, ‘Lord, open the King of England’s eyes’!”

As Wakeman, a high-church historian, states, there was “a constantly increasing number of all classes in England who were being powerfully affected by the doctrines of Zwingli through the teaching of Tyndale and his associates, and many more who were quite prepared to follow the same path.”

## CHAPTER IV

### PURITANISM UNDER EDWARD VI.— ITS ‘CONCEPTION’

**1. Both Edward and the Lord Protector in favour of Reform.**—A great stride forward was taken under Edward (1547–1553). He was only nine years old on his accession to the throne, but, evidently not without deliberate purpose on his father’s part, his education had been committed to men attached to the reformed doctrine, and Edward himself grew up in strong sympathy with it. It is significant, too, that the Council of Regency appointed by the late King was predominantly in favour of the same religious policy. So early as 1542 the archbishop had notified Henry’s pleasure that “all massbooks, antiphoners, portuises (breviaries) in the Church of England should be newly examined, corrected, reformed,” that certain ‘superstitious’ matter should be ejected, and that their place should be supplied by services “made out of the Scriptures and other authentic doctors”; and new service-books had already been prepared in Henry’s time.<sup>1</sup> But very important for the future

<sup>1</sup> Hardwick’s *Reformation*, p. 206.

policy under Edward was the fact that the Earl of Hertford, Edward's uncle, who became Lord Protector, and real "master of all the deliberations of the Council, and in effect sole director of the affairs of the kingdom," and assumed the title of Duke of Somerset, "attached himself to the Calvinistic party, and wished to assimilate the Church to Calvinistic models" (Wakeman). Hardwick characterises him as "an ultra-reformer on principle."

**2. Sweeping Changes.**—Accordingly, a series of sweeping changes was speedily effected. A set of 'Injunctions' was issued which, among other things, required that the clergy should preach once a quarter against pilgrimages and praying to images; that images abused with pilgrimages and offerings should be taken down; that within three months every church should be provided with a Bible; that all shrines, pictures, paintings, and other monuments of feigned miracles on walls or windows should be taken away; and that the Epistle and Gospel should be read in English. The Six Articles of Henry VIII. and the severe Acts against heresy were repealed. It was enacted that the Lord's Supper should be administered in English and in both kinds, and permission was given to the clergy to marry. A Committee of bishops and other clergy, under the guidance of Cranmer, drew up an Order of Communion in English, which was taken, so far as it was new and evangelical, from the 'Consultation' of Hermann, compiled by Bucer and Melanchthon. A new Ordinal was also drawn up,

taken largely from a form which had been prepared by Bucer.<sup>1</sup> But the chief fruit of the Committee's labours was what is known as "The First Prayer-Book of Edward vi.," which was taken chiefly from the Old Sarum Use, the Breviary of Cardinal Quignon, and the other sources just indicated. By the First Act of Uniformity it was by a penal statute declared to be the only legal service-book in England.

**3. Desire for more Radical Reforms.**—But what has been done so far has been called, not inaptly, "a completion of the work of Henry VIII." rather than the outcome of the new spirit that prevailed under Edward VI. Cranmer and the advanced reformers who were now associated with him and advised him had already got far beyond the stage of progress marked by the First Prayer-Book, which was still in a great degree mediaeval. In fact, as has been truly said, the ink was scarcely dry on the first copies of it when Cranmer himself began to make notes for its revision. Many, like Hooper, Coverdale, Rogers, and Ridley, who had been driven into exile in the reign of Henry, and who were there inspired with a desire for a more radical reform—Hardwick calls them "the first race of Puritans"—now returned, and began to preach vehemently against the mass, and the use of 'altars,' images, and other 'monuments of idolatry.'

<sup>1</sup> Compare Bucer's "De ordinatione legitima Ministrorum Ecclesiarum revocanda" in his *Scripta Anglicana* with the English Ordinal of 1549.

**4. Ridley.**—In 1550, Ridley, who had come under the influence of Peter Martyr, the Basel theologian, was transferred from the See of Rochester to that of London, and here, as he had done at Rochester, he signalled his promotion by an attack on altars. The altar in St. Paul's was pulled down in his presence, an order was issued to his clergy to remove the altars from their churches; and a week later the Council sent out instructions to all the bishops requiring them to have the altars in their dioceses taken away. The destruction of altars was a visible sign of the change that had taken place in eucharistic doctrine. Cranmer had just published a treatise on the Lord's Supper, affirming what was in substance the Calvinistic view of it. Both Hooper and Traheron, writing to Bullinger, state that Cranmer's view of the Lord's Supper is similar to his, which was Calvinistic, for he and Calvin united in the Helvetic Consensus.<sup>1</sup>

**5. Hooper.**—But Hooper was still more advanced in his views than Ridley. A graduate of Oxford and a Cistercian monk, John Hooper early imbibed the new doctrine. On the passing of Henry's Six Articles he was compelled to leave Oxford, and to withdraw to the Continent. He found a congenial refuge at Zurich, where for two years he was under the influence and tuition of Henry Bullinger, Zwingli's successor at Zurich, and next to Calvin the most influential leader of the Reformed Church. He was the author of the

<sup>1</sup> *Original Letters*, Letter xxxvi. pp. 71, 72; Letter cli. p. 322.

second Helvetic Confession, "the most authoritative symbol of the Reformed Church"; the "Consensus Tigurinus," drawn up by him and Calvin, united the Swiss Churches generally; and for many years he was the trusted guide and counsellor of the leaders of the Reformation in England. Hooper was in full sympathy with the principles of Bullinger, and, being a man of fervent piety, laboured with all his might, on his return to England, to have them carried into practice. He was, in fact, an earnest Puritan in all but the name. "Christ's kingdom is a spiritual one," he said. "In this neither king nor pope may govern. Christ alone is the Governor of the Church, and the only Lawgiver."<sup>1</sup> Again, "God hath bound His Church, and all men that be of His Church, to the Word of God. It is bound unto no title or name of men, nor unto any ordinary succession of bishops or priests; longer than they teach the doctrine contained in Scripture, no man should give hearing unto them." Again: "Christ and His Apostles be *grandfathers* in age to the doctors and masters of learning. Repose thyself only on the Church that they have taught thee by Scripture." As to the Lord's Supper, he says, "If the minister have bread, wine, a table, and a fair table-cloth, let him not be solicitous nor careful for the rest, seeing they be no things brought in by Christ. . . . Great shame it is for a noble king, emperor, or magistrate, contrary to God's Word, to detain or keep from the devil and his minister any of

<sup>1</sup> *Early Writings* (Parker Society), p. 280.

their goods or treasure, as the candles, vestments, crosses, altars ! For if they be kept in the church as things indifferent, at length they will be maintained as things necessary." In the fourth of his 'Seven Sermons' preached before the King and his Council, he says, "As long as the altars remain, both the ignorant people and the ignorant and evil persuaded priest will dream always of sacrifice."<sup>1</sup> In view of such sentiments we are not surprised to hear him say of the First Prayer-Book, "I am so much offended with that book, and not without abundant reason, that, if it be not corrected, I neither can nor will communicate with the Church in the administration of the Lord's Supper";<sup>2</sup> nor to learn from a letter of Burcher to Bullinger that "Hooper is striving to effect an entire purification of the Church from the very foundation."<sup>3</sup> It is not without reason that Maitland calls Hooper "the father of the Puritans."

**6. Hooper Opposes the Papal Vestments.**—In May 1550 Hooper was nominated to the See of Gloucester. Although he regarded prelacy as a mere human institution, that did not prevent him from accepting the office; but to two matters connected with the consecration ceremony he did demur strongly. He objected to the form of the oath acknowledging the King's supremacy, and to the papal vestments worn at investiture. The obnoxious phrase in the oath, which

<sup>1</sup> *Early Writings*, pp. 431 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> *Original Letters*, Letter xxxviii. p. 79.

<sup>3</sup> *Original Letters*, p. 674.

required the person being consecrated to swear "by the saints," was struck out by the King's own hand ; and the Council asked Cranmer to consecrate Hooper without the vestments ; but Cranmer replied that he could not do so without a change of the law. Ridley tried to reason Hooper out of his scruples ; but the latter published *A Godly Confession and Protestantation* against the garments, and was actually committed to the Fleet prison ; but a compromise was ultimately arranged.

**7. Why He Opposed Them.**—It may be asked, Why did Hooper make such an ado about the vestments ? The reason was that they were held to be symbolical, and in the popular mind were associated with the idea of priesthood, and regarded as badges of popery. If they are alleged to be among things 'indifferent,' the reply of Hooper and his friends was that in that case the magistrate has no right to impose them, for that is to take them out of the category of things indifferent and to make them necessary, which is an infringement of Christian liberty.

**8. Cranmer and Ridley Adopt His Views.**—Indeed there was not one of the martyr bishops who did not come ultimately to accept of the view of Hooper. Bishop Burnet says that both Cranmer and Ridley came to repent of their conduct towards him, and that they intended to procure an Act for abolishing the 'Aaronical garments.' When the executioners were pulling off the popish vestments at his martyrdom, Cranmer said, "I myself had done with this gear long

ago." Ridley wrote from prison to Hooper lauding his (Hooper's) wisdom and blaming his own simplicity in the matter, and Foxe reports that Ridley too, when just before his death they pulled off the apparel to degrade him, inveighed against it, calling it "foolish, abominable, and too fond for a vice in a play."<sup>1</sup>

**9. Continental Reformers in England.**—But we have now to notice an influence which powerfully affected Cranmer and the other leaders of the Reformation in England. By the Smalcald war and the *Interim* of 1548 several distinguished Continental reformers were driven from their own country, and came as refugees to England, where they were warmly received by Cranmer and others, and had an important influence on the course of affairs. Certain Anglican writers try to minimise their influence, but the evidence contained in the *Original Letters* from the archives of Zurich, and in other documents, puts the fact beyond question.

**10. Martin Bucer.**—One of the eminent leaders referred to was Martin Bucer, the Strassburg reformer, who held the Calvinistic view of the Lord's Supper, and mediated between the Zwinglians and the Lutherans, and who, on the urgent invitation of Cranmer, who desired his advice and council, now arrived in England.<sup>2</sup> He had already, as we have seen, helped to shape the *English Communion Service*,

<sup>1</sup> Ridley's *Works* (Parker Society), p. 355; Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, vol. iii. p. 427.

<sup>2</sup> *Original Letters*, p. 19, also p. 332.

and the *Ordinal*. He arrived in April 1549, and, after being entertained by the archbishop in his palace at Lambeth, was appointed to the theological chair at Cambridge.

**11. His Criticism of the Prayer-Book.**—On the issue of Edward's First Prayer-Book Cranmer sent Bucer a copy of it for examination and criticism. His criticisms extended to twenty-eight chapters,<sup>1</sup> and were endorsed by Peter Martyr Vermigli, another famous foreigner from Basel, who had been appointed to the chair of theology at Oxford. The criticisms made a speedy revision necessary.

**12. His Draft of a Primitive Church System.**—At the same time Bucer prepared, with Cranmer's consent, a 'Draft of a more primitive Church system' for the use and guidance of the King.<sup>2</sup> It was dedicated to Edward, and sent to him first in manuscript. In this treatise Bucer suggests a method of reducing episcopacy by requiring the bishops to manage all things in Council with the presbyters, for bishops and presbyters were originally one and the same; and he would have ruling as well as teaching presbyters, and provincial synods. In the true Puritan spirit he insisted on a more strict discipline in the Church, he required Scripture authority for all arrangements, and taught that the government of the Church should be under Christ alone in the hands of the office-bearers.

**13. How the King Regarded it.**—The King, who was

<sup>1</sup> See Bucer's *Scripta Anglicana*.

<sup>2</sup> See "De Regno Christi" in the *Scripta Anglicana* of Bucer.

quite exceptionally intelligent for his age, was delighted with Bucer's treatise, and with his own hand drew out a programme of reformation on the lines of it. To the great grief of Edward, and all friends of the Reformation, Bucer died at Cambridge a month later. And in a document written after that event the King mourns his inability to have the primitive discipline restored, "because those bishops who should execute it are men unable, some for papistry, some for ignorance, some for age, some for their ill name, some for all these"<sup>1</sup> But this is not the only evidence we have of the direction in which the inclinations of the King and his advisers were tending. The writings of A'Lasco, edited by Dr. Kuyper of Amsterdam, are no less significant, and reveal a similar desire on the part of the King and his counsellors.

**14. John A'Lasco.**—John A'Lasco was a Polish nobleman and reformer of high birth, who might have been at the head of the Roman Catholic Church in his native country—he was offered two mitres—but he turned away from such prospects and became an advanced reformer. "We have, therefore, invited both yourself and some other learned men," Cranmer writes to him, "and we earnestly request you both to come yourself and, if possible, to bring Melancthon along with you."<sup>2</sup> A'Lasco came, and resided with the archbishop at Lambeth and Windsor during the autumn and winter of 1548–49. "John A'Lasco,"

<sup>1</sup> *King Edward's Remains*, ii.

<sup>2</sup> *Original Letters*, ix. p. 17.

Cranmer says, "a most admirable man, lived with me these three months in closest and friendliest intercourse." He returned for a time to Emden in March, but the issue of the *Interim* compelled him to flee, and he arrived in London a second time in May 1550, with a letter of credit from Albert of Brandenburg to the Lord Protector Somerset.

**15. 'The Church of the Strangers.'**—There were at this time about 5000 foreign exiles in London, chiefly German and French. By letters patent and by an Act of Parliament they were constituted into one Reformed Protestant Church, called 'The Church of the Strangers.' The charter forming them into a corporate body recognises John A'Lasco as their chief pastor, with four colleagues; and it invests them with the right of self-government, and power to elect their own office-bearers. As a matter of fact, in doctrine, polity, and worship they were Presbyterian.

**16. The King's Object in Sanctioning it.**—In a work entitled *Forma ac Ratio*, A'Lasco explains their form of government and administration, and the object of the King in expressly sanctioning their organisation. He says, "When I was called by the King, and when certain laws prevented much that was in use under the Papacy from being purged out, as he himself greatly desired, he secured for me, when I was solicitous about foreign churches, that exiles who were not strictly nor to the same extent bound by these laws, should have churches of their own, in which they should freely regulate all things according

to primitive methods, without any regard to existing rites ; so that the English churches might be incited to embrace apostolic purity, with joint consent of all estates of the realm. Of this project the young King himself was chief author and prime expounder.” A’Lasco was one of the Royal Commissioners appointed in 1551 to revise the ecclesiastical laws. It is highly probable that, had the King been spared a short time longer, the form of the Church of England would have been brought into closer conformity with that of the other Reformed Churches.

**17. John Knox.**—Another Reformer, quite as noteworthy as any I have named, now made his appearance in England, and soon caused his presence to be felt there. This was John Knox, who had been released from the French galleys, probably through the friendly offices of Edward and his Council, in 1549, and from that date till after the King’s death continued to labour and to exercise an important influence, first at Berwick, then at Newcastle-on-Tyne, and then as one of the six royal chaplains. John Uttenhove, writing to Bullinger, October 12, 1552, speaks of ‘a pious preacher,’ ‘a Scotsman by nation,’ ‘inveighing with great freedom against kneeling at the Lord’s Supper’ before the King and his Council, and of his ‘having wrought upon the minds of many persons.’<sup>1</sup> It was, there is little doubt, through Knox’s influence that a declaration on kneeling at the Communion, called by high-church men ‘the Black Rubric,’ was added to the Revised Prayer-Book, explaining that no adoration was intended by that

<sup>1</sup> *Original Letters*, p. 591.

posture ; and with regard to which Dean Weston said in 1554 : “A runnagate Scot dyd take away the adoration or worshipping of Christ in the Sacrament : by whose procurement that heresie was put into the last Communion Book ; so much prevailed that one man’s authority at that time.” Knox was offered, but declined, the bishopric of Rochester. The offer was made at the instance of the Duke of Northumberland, who wrote to Secretary Cecil : “I would to God it might please the King’s Majesty to appoint Mr. Knox to the office of Rochester bishopric. He would be a whetstone to quicken and sharp the Bishop of Canterbury, whereof he hath need.”

**18. The Second Prayer-Book of Edward.**—Through the various agencies and influences just indicated the feeling in favour of a more thorough reformation was deepened and extended ; and the feeling expressed itself in some measure in the revision of the First Prayer-Book, and the appearance of what is known as the Second Prayer-Book of Edward. Many of the old rites and ceremonies were discarded, such as exorcism, anointing, and the ceremonial use of the white garment in baptism ; the use of oil in confirmation, in the visitation of the sick, and in extreme unction ; prayer for the dead in the office of burial, auricular confession, and the use of the cross in Confirmation and in the Eucharistic service. But the most important changes were those made in the service of Communion, the word ‘mass’ in the title was omitted, the word ‘table’ was substituted for ‘altar,’ ‘minister’ and ‘priest’

were used as equivalent terms ; Eucharistic vestments were forbidden ; and the words of administration were changed from "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life," into "Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving"; while, as we have seen, a rubric was added explaining that adoration was not meant by kneeling. Certain Articles of Cranmer were revised by a Commission and published by royal authority, the number being forty-two. The article on the Eucharist repudiated the doctrine of the real presence.

**19. The Progress now made Summarised.**—The progress already made at the end of Edward's reign may be briefly summed up. On the vestments question the views of Hooper were accepted by the leading reformers, including Cranmer and Ridley; on the vital subject of the Eucharist the Helvetic, which was now the Calvinistic, doctrine was held by them; on the doctrines of election and predestination the Reformed views prevailed. Strype affirms that Ridley and Bradford wrote on predestination, and that Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer approved of Bradford's treatise. Bradford taught unconditional Election. Indeed Cranmer's notes in the Great Bible teach the same.<sup>1</sup> Even on the subject of Church government the views of the chief reformers were in theory not very different from those of Calvin and the Continental

<sup>1</sup> See Hunt's *Religious Thought in England*, i. 33.

reformers. Not one of them held the *jure divino* theory of prelacy. The *Institution of a Christian Man*, drawn up and signed by Cranmer, twelve other bishops, and twenty-three doctors of theology and professors of Canon Law, and published in the time of Henry VIII., repudiates the divine origin of prelacy, and states that "in the New Testament there is no mention made of any degrees or distinctions in orders, but only of deacons or ministers, and of priests or bishops." In another document drawn up by Cranmer, entitled *The Resolutions of Several Bishops and Divines of some Questions Concerning the Sacraments*, etc., he says: "The bishops and priests were at one time, and were no two things, but both one office in the beginning of Christ's religion."<sup>1</sup> A committee of Convocation approved of a Catechism drawn up by Dr. Nowell, one statement of which was that "in churches well ordered and well mannered, there was, as I said before, ordained and kept a certain form and order of governance. There were chosen elders, that is, ecclesiastical magistrates, to hold and keep the discipline of the church."<sup>2</sup> Even with the revised Prayer-Book Cranmer was far from satisfied. Bullinger, who was in close and frequent communication with him and the other leaders, tells the exiles at Frankfort in the time of Mary that "the archbishop had drawn up a book of prayers a hundred times more perfect than that which was then in being, but the same could not

<sup>1</sup> See Burnet's *Reformation*, 1. (ii.) Collection of Records, xxi.

<sup>2</sup> Parker Society's Edition, p. 218. See also Memoir prefixed.

take place for that he was matched with such a wicked clergy and convocation and other enemies.”<sup>1</sup>

It is thus evident that at the end of Edward’s reign the leading English reformers in their fundamental principles and desires were virtually at one with the Reformed Church, and not far from the position taken by the Puritans in the time of Elizabeth. The words of Thomas Fuller are thus as true as they are characteristically quaint and pithy when Puritanism is described by him as a system which “in the days of King Edward was conceived; which afterward in the reign of Queen Mary (but beyond sea at Frankfort) was born; which in the reign of Queen Elizabeth was nursed and weaned; which under King James grew up a youth or tall stripling; but towards the end of King Charles’s reign shot up to the full strength and stature of a man, able not only to cope with, but conquer the Hierarchy, its adversary.”<sup>2</sup> We have to trace its history and fortunes through all these stages. We have described its ‘conception’ in the days of Edward; in the next chapter we have to notice its ‘birth’ beyond the sea at Frankfort.

<sup>1</sup> Strype’s *Life of Cranmer*, p. 266.

<sup>2</sup> *Church History of Britain*, bk. vii. century xvi., 23.

## CHAPTER V

### PURITANISM UNDER MARY TUDOR—"ITS BIRTH BEYOND SEA"

**1. Mary's Service to Protestantism.**—It is impossible to recount here the details of Mary's reign. Suffice it to say that the whole ecclesiastical structure set up in the two previous reigns was speedily swept away. Cranmer, Ridley, Hooper, Latimer, and others of Edward's bishops, were thrown into prison, and in due time brought to the stake. Gardiner, Bonner, Heath, and other Roman Catholic bishops, were reinstated in office. Bonner, as Bishop of London, became the chief agent of Mary in the terrible tragedies which ensued, earning for himself and his sovereign the epithet of 'bloody.' But even the memorable martyrdoms of Rogers, Hooper, Ridley, Latimer, and Cranmer must be passed over. In three years some three hundred victims were burned at the stake, and on to the last the Queen gave no sign of relenting her severity. The most recent research shows that Mary herself must be held responsible for the deep and indelible stain of blood which her brief reign has left on the page of English

history. The chief service she had done by the martyr fires she had kindled was to burn into the heart of the English people a deep hatred of Popery. The martyrs had, in the dying words of Latimer, "lighted a candle that would never be put out."

**2. The English Reformers in Exile.**—But happily the reformers did not all perish at the hand of the executioner. Not far from a thousand Englishmen whose lives were in peril under Mary fled to the Continent, and found shelter in such cities as Zurich, Basel, Strassburg, Emden, Frankfort, and Geneva. Their treatment by the Lutherans remains as a dark blot on the history of the Lutheran Church. The exiles were expelled from the cities in which they had taken refuge in Saxony and elsewhere because they were not able to pronounce the shibboleth of Consubstantiation; but they found a welcome asylum in the more hospitable folds of the Reformed Churches.

**3. The Conflict between Anglicanism and Puritanism begins at Frankfort.**—It is the exiles at Frankfort-on-the-Main who first demand our attention, for among them a conflict began which ended in a cleavage that continues to this hour, with the Anglicans on one side and the Puritans on the other. As the division became so permanent, and its consequences so momentous, and as it was so soon to reappear in England, we must briefly notice the circumstances out of which it grew.

**4. English Refugees find an Asylum at Frankfort.**—

The Walloon or French congregation, which under Edward vi. had been allowed to meet for worship at Glastonbury, had, when driven from England on the accession of Mary, with their pastor Vallerand Pullain, found a safe harbour at Frankfort, where a church was assigned to their use, and where they had liberty from the Senate "for their whole ecclesiastical ministry both of the Word and Sacraments." When thus a number of English refugees, with Whittingham, came to Frankfort in June 1554, they found the little French congregation already settled there. On the evening of their arrival Pullain the French pastor waited on them, informing them that the grant of a church and the liberty of worship which they had obtained was not for themselves only, but "in the name of all such as should come out of England for the Gospel," and inviting them to unite with his congregation. They explained that they were not able to avail themselves of this offer, "forasmuch as fewe of them understood the French tongue." They, however, got permission to remain in the city, and to arrange with the Walloons for an alternate occupation of the church, but on condition that they "should not dissent from the Frenchmen in doctrine or ceremonies, lest they should minister an occasion of offence," and that they should "approve and subscribe" the Confession of Faith presented by the French. To this they readily consented. They modified the English Prayer-Book so as to meet these conditions. It was agreed unanimously that the

Litany, the Responses and the Surplice should not be used; a new Confession was substituted for that in the English service, and after the Confession "a psalme in metre in a plain tune" after the example of the French, Dutch, and other Reformed Churches. So far the community of English exiles was composed of persons who wished for a church order purged of the Roman rites and usages, and more conformed to the Genevan model than the English Service-Book.

**5. They Invite their Fellow-Exiles to join Them.**—Grateful for the favour extended to them, they immediately wrote to their fellow-countrymen in Zurich, Strassburg, and other cities, informing them of the privileges they enjoyed at Frankfort, and inviting them to come and share in them. The brethren at Strassburg refused to come unless the church at Frankfort should be put under the oversight of an English bishop. The reply from Zurich requires the use of Edward's Second Prayer-Book, and intimates that they are "fully determined to admit and use no other." In response to another letter from Frankfort the Zurich exiles sent one of their number, Richard Chambers, to negotiate, but still insisting on Edward's Book. The Frankfort exiles pointed out that they could not have "the full use of the English book" without violating the conditions on which they had got the use of the church, and in a letter which Chambers carried back with him the Zurich brethren were told that they at Frankfort were ready to use the Prayer-Book so far

as God's word sanctioned it, that there were things in it which they could not approve, that it had already been altered from its first form, and would have been altered still further had the King's life been spared.

**6. Knox and Lever become Pastors.**—A call had been sent to John Knox at Geneva, and to Thomas Lever at Zurich, to become the joint pastors of the congregation at Frankfort. It was only through "the powerful intercession of Calvin" that Knox accepted the call. Another deputation from the Zurich and Strassburg refugees, consisting of Grindal and Chambers, endeavoured to arrange a settlement. They said that if "the substance and effect" of the book were allowed they would not insist on "such ceremonies and things which the country could not bear." As to what was meant by the 'substance' of the book they had no instructions. This attempt also failed.

**7. Calvin's Judgment on the Prayer-Book.**—Knox offered to withdraw and return to Geneva, but this would not be entertained. Knox and Whittingham sent Calvin a 'platt' or summary of the unprofitable ceremonies in the Prayer-Book, and besought his opinion of them. It was in reply to that communication that Calvin gave his memorable judgment that "there were many fooleries or trifles that may be borne with in it (*tolerabiles ineptiæ*), which, because at first they could not be amended were to be suffered; but that it behoved the learned, grave, and godly ministers of Christ to enterprise farther, and to set up some-

thing more filed from rust, and purer. If religion had flourished till this day in England, many of these things should have been corrected. But since the Reformation is overthrown, and a church is to be set up in another place, where you are at liberty to establish what order is most for edification, I cannot tell what they mean who are so fond of the leavings of Popish dregs."

**8. A Compromise Liturgy Adopted.**—A service modelled on Calvin's Liturgy was drawn up by Knox, Whittingham, Gilby, Foxe, and Cole, but Knox refused to force it on the church at Frankfort. It was agreed, on Knox's suggestion, to appoint a committee who should produce an expurgated Anglican Liturgy, which by consent of the congregation should be used till April 1556, that is for the next three months, and should any disagreement arise it was to be referred to Calvin, Musculus, Martyr, Bullinger, and Viret. The agreement was put in writing and signed by all parties.

**9. The Peace Broken.**—Long before the three months had elapsed an incident had occurred which quite changed the situation. A Dr. Cox, who had been tutor to Edward vi., and one of the Commission that revised Edward's Prayer-Book—a man of domineering and headstrong temper—had come to Frankfort with a fresh party of refugees, and refused to be bound by the 'Liturgy of Compromise.' "They said that they would do as had been done in England, and that they would have the face of an English

Church." On the very first Lord's Day, contrary to the agreement, they made the responses during the service, and on the next Lord's Day, one of their number, Jewcl, admitted to the pulpit by Lever, read the Litany while his friends gave the responses. It was Knox's turn to preach in the afternoon, when he took the opportunity of speaking plainly to the peace-breakers, and with reference to the Prayer-Book. The magistrates, after much discussion between the parties, wherein they failed to arrive at an agreement, ordered the congregation henceforth to use the French Liturgy on pain of having the church doors closed against them.

**10. Knox Forecasts the Issue.**—In a letter to the Frankfort Senate, Knox and his friends point out that if the evil they complain of is not redressed "neither shall there be for ever any end of this controversy in England." They are asked to refer the matter to "the five men above named" and "our whole posterity, yea our whole English nation, and all good men shall be bound unto you for this great benefit." It is a proof of Knox's sagacity and foresight that events fell out in England exactly as he had foreseen, and the division which was now left unhealed reappeared there, and still continues.

**11. A mean Artifice to get Rid of Knox.**—But Knox's opponents now had recourse to a singularly discreditable, mean, and malicious device in order to defeat him. Let Thomas Fuller, the quaint episcopal historian, tell the story—

"The Coxian party, depressed, embrace a strange way to raise themselves, and accuse Knox to the State for no less than high treason against the Emperor, in an English book of his, *An Admonition to Christians*, first privately preached in Buckinghamshire, and now publicly printed to the world, wherein he had called the Emperor 'no less an enemy to Christ than Nero.' Strange that words spoken some years since, in another land and language, against the Emperor, to whom Knox then owed no natural allegiance (though since a casual and accidental one by his removal into an Imperial city), should in this unhappy juncture of time, be urged against him by exiles of his own religion, even to no less than the endangering of his life! . . . But such, too often, is the badness of good people, that in the heat of passion they account any play to be fair play which tends to the overturning of those with whom they contend. Hereupon, the State of Frankfort, as an Imperial town highly concerned to be tender of the Emperor's honour, willed Knox to depart the city; who on March 25, 1555, to the great grief of his friends and followers, left the congregation."

**12. Knox Returns to Geneva.**—On the night before his departure his friends to the number of fifty met in his lodging, and listened to "a most comfortable sermon" from him, and the following day, having convoyed him some miles from the city, bade him God speed "with great heaviness of harte and plentie of tears." After Knox left, Cox and his friends wrote

to Calvin in defence of their action, but Calvin tells them in reply "that Master Knox was, in my judgment, neither godly nor brotherly dealt with."<sup>1</sup>

**13. The First Puritan Congregation Organised.**—On leaving Frankfort, Knox returned to Geneva, where he found a more peaceful and congenial field of labour. Through the good offices of Calvin the English exiles at Geneva had a church placed at their service, and Knox now became their minister. His ministry was soon interrupted by a visit to Scotland. After a year's absence he returned to Geneva in September 1556, with his wife and mother-in-law. In his absence the congregation had received considerable accessions. Whittingham and others had come from Frankfort. The Temple de Notre Dame la Neuve, now the *Auditoire de Philosophie*, was placed at their service. At the annual election of ministers Knox was re-elected, with Christopher Goodman as colleague. A Book of Common Order was adopted, the first draft of which probably had been already made at Frankfort, bearing the title "The Forme of Prayers and Ministrations of the Sacraments, etc., used in the English Congregation at Geneva; and approved by the famous and godly learned man John Calvyn." It is sometimes called "Knox's Liturgy,"

<sup>1</sup> The chief source of information with respect to the conflict at Frankfort is *A Brief Discourse of the Troubles begun at Frankfort in Germany, A.D. 1554*. See also Knox's *History of the Reformation, and Original Letters*, p. 754.

or "The Book of Geneva," and with some alterations became the "Book of Common Order" of the Church of Scotland. The dedication explains why the vestments and ceremonies of Edward's Service-Book have been discarded.

Here, then, we see organising itself that Presbyterian Puritanism which by and by became such a power in Scotland and in England too. A unique congregation that was, with Knox and Goodman as ministers, men like Whittingham, Sampson, and Miles Coverdale as elders, and persons like Sir Francis Knollys, who became comptroller of Elizabeth's household, as ordinary members. "The term, so famous in English history," says Dr. Hume Brown, "by which the party of Goodman and Knox came to be designated was not yet invented; but in every essential feature the party had already a perfectly defined existence. It is as the first Puritan congregation that the church presided over by Knox and Goodman in Geneva possesses a historic importance which it is necessary to emphasise. It was to this congregation that the most strenuous 'Nonconformists' belonged, who afterwards refused to accept the religion of compromise established by Elizabeth, and it is in the writings of Knox and Goodman that those doctrines were first unflinchingly expounded which eventually became the tradition of Puritanism."<sup>1</sup> "The most interesting phasis which the Reformation anywhere assumes, especially for us English," Carlyle says of

<sup>1</sup> *John Knox*, vol. i. p. 203.

it. This Puritanism, he adds, "came forth as a real business of the heart, and has produced in the world very notable fruit. In some senses, one may say, it is the only phasis of Protestantism that ever got to the rank of being a Faith, a true heart-communication with heaven, and of exhibiting itself in history as such, and history will have something to say about this Puritanism for some time to come."<sup>1</sup>

**14. The Bible Translated.**—A very noteworthy work done by the English exiles at Geneva was their translation of the Bible, which under the name of the "Geneva Bible" became the most popular English version for several generations. The New Testament was translated chiefly by Whittingham; the Old Testament by Coverdale, Gilby, Sampson, and other Hebraists. It was in this version that the division of the texts into verses first appeared.

**15. Constitutional Government Advocated.**—Another remarkable treatise came from the pen of Christopher Goodman, with the title *How Superior Powers ought to be Obeyed by their Subjects; and wherein they may be Disobeyed and Resisted*. It is an exposition of that Constitutional government in Church and State for which the Puritans never ceased to contend. It shows that obedience to the civil power is commanded, but under conditions—that "both princes and peoples are to be subject to the same divine laws; and that thereby the tyranny of princes and the rebellion of subjects may be avoided."

<sup>1</sup> Carlyle's Lectures on Heroes, Sect. iv.

It was at a later time warmly commended by John Milton.

So much respecting what Fuller calls “the birth” of Puritanism “beyond sea”: we have next to see how it was “nursed and weaned” under Elizabeth.



## BOOK II

**PURITANISM “NURSED AND WEANED”  
UNDER ELIZABETH**



## CHAPTER I

### THE VESTMENTS AND CEREMONIES OPPOSED

**1. Joy at Elizabeth's Accession.**—It was on the 17th November 1558, at the opening of winter, that Elizabeth came to the throne, but her accession was hailed with a feeling of joy and hope not unlike that with which, after the gloom of winter, all living things greet the advent of spring.

**2. Her Religious Policy Foreshadowed.**—In the earlier months of her reign Roman Catholicism was still the statutory religion. The Queen and her ministers, therefore, proceeded with caution; but significant signs of the religious policy she contemplated soon appeared. She caressingly kissed the Bible presented to her on her entry into London; and her hand was, as it were, involuntarily drawn back from Bonner's kiss, for, as Maitland remarks, “she was an artist to her finger tips!” The Litany in English was used when she was present (which, it seems, could be legally done), and the Epistle and Gospel were also read in English. The officiating bishop was forbidden to elevate the Host. “Away with those torches, we can see well enough!” she

cried to the abbot and monks of Westminster Abbey as they came to meet her in procession with candles in their hands.

**3. The Act of Supremacy Passed.**—Convocation voted for the Mass and the Papal Supremacy, and in opposition to change. But Parliament passed the Act of Supremacy (April 29, 1559), declaring Elizabeth to be “the only supreme governor” of the realm in spiritual as well as temporal causes; a statute of Henry VIII. was revived which declared the sovereign to be “supreme head on earth” of the Church of England, with all ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and she was enabled to delegate her power to commissioners, whose court became known as the Court of High Commission, and an instrument of tyranny and oppression.

**4. The Act of Uniformity Passed.**—In the same session of Parliament an Act of Uniformity was passed which restored the Act of Edward VI., authorising the Book of Common Prayer with alterations that made it more mediæval and reactionary. At the Queen’s instance all passages that bore hard on the Pope were struck out; the rubric which explained that by kneeling at the Communion no adoration of the elements was meant was expunged; the old festivals and Popish vestments prescribed in the unrevised Prayer-Book of Edward were enjoined; and all were required on pain of severe penalties to worship according to the forms now authorised. These measures were carried against the strong opposition of the ecclesiastical authorities,

who were still Romanist in sentiment. “Neither in its original form of 1552, nor in its revised form of 1559, did the Prayer-Book receive any ecclesiastical sanction whatever” (Wakeman).

**5. Bishops Consecrated.**—The Bishops in occupancy being Romanists, all, except one, refused to take the Oath of Supremacy, and were deprived. The vacant sees were not filled up for some time in the hope that some of the old bishops would conform, but they continued obdurate. Later, the Archbishopric of Canterbury was offered to David Whitehead, who had been chaplain to Elizabeth’s mother; but he was opposed both to the ceremonies and the episcopal government, and declined the dignity. Miles Coverdale, who had been a bishop under Edward, and an elder in Knox’s congregation in Geneva, Bernard Gilpin, and Thomas Sampson, refused bishoprics for similar reasons. At length, however, Matthew Parker was consecrated to the Archbishopric of Canterbury on December 17, 1559; and a few days later he consecrated eleven bishops, most, if not all, of whom had been exiles among the Reformed Churches on the Continent, and had imbibed sentiments in favour of a further reformation, so that they hesitated much with regard to the acceptance of office, and sought the advice of the Continental divines before doing so. They accepted office, as the Zurich letters show, in the hope of having the objectionable ceremonies removed, and of bringing the English Church into closer conformity with the other Reformed Churches.

## 6. The Advanced Reformers far from Contented.—

Dr. Lindsay, usually a very careful writer, says that when the Act of Uniformity was passed "the advanced reformers were contented." When Bullinger said that "King Edward's reformation satisfied the godly" both the context and other statements of his clearly show that he meant that they were satisfied with it comparatively, that is, as compared with the Augsburg Confession, which, he says, some proposed, but which gave vexation to the purer churches. Edward's Prayer-Book was certainly not "the goal placed before them" by Bullinger, as Dr. Lindsay says.<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, Peter Martyr, writing from Zurich, November 4, 1559, to Thomas Sampson, and referring to the vestments, says: "Seeing they are mere relics of Popery, Master Bullinger is of opinion that you should not use them"; and writing again on February 1, 1560, he urges Sampson to "endeavour by every means in his power to have them laid aside" . . . "every effort must be made to get rid of them as relics of the Amorites"; and he adds that he has conferred with Bullinger on the whole matter.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Lindsay says there were some things about the Elizabethan settlement which made it difficult to understand the contentment of such men as Grindal, Jewel, and Sandys. As a matter of fact, there is abundant evidence that they were not 'contented.' Of course they were well pleased that Popery had

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Reformation*, vol. ii. p. 402.

<sup>2</sup> *Zurich Letters*, Second Series, pp. 32, 40.

been disestablished, and Protestantism put in its place, but they were far from being ‘contented.’ Strype says of Grindal that when he was nominated to the See of London he “remained under some scruples of conscience about some things; especially the habits and certain ceremonies required to be used of such as were bishops.”<sup>1</sup> Writing to Peter Martyr prior to the appointment of the new bishops, Jewel says: “The scenic apparatus of divine worship is now under agitation; and those very things which you and I have so often laughed at are now seriously and solemnly entertained by certain persons (for we are not consulted), as if the Christian religion could not exist without something tawdry.” “These fooleries,” he calls them. Writing on November 5, 1559, he says: “As to what you write respecting religion and the theatrical habits, I heartily wish it could be accomplished. But those persons who have taken such delight in these matters have followed, I believe, the ignorance of the priests, whom, when they found them to be no better than mere logs of wood, without talent, or learning, or morality, they were willing at least to commend to the people by that comical dress.” “These ridiculous trifles” “are indeed, as you very properly observe, the relics of the Amorites. For who can deny it? And I wish that some time or other they may be taken away, and extirpated even to the lowest roots.” Again, November 16, 1559: “The doctrine is everywhere

<sup>1</sup> Strype’s *Life of Grindal*, pp. 28, 29.

most pure ; but as to ceremonies and maskings, there is a little too much foolery. The little silver cross, of ill-omened origin, still retains its place in the Queen's chapel. Wretched me ! this thing will soon be drawn into a precedent. . . . But, as far as I can perceive, it is now a hopeless case. . . . Cecil favours our cause most ardently." Writing when the controversy about the crucifix in the Queen's chapel was at its height, Jewel says : "As far as I can conjecture, I shall not again write to you as bishop. For matters are come to that pass, that either the crosses of silver and tin, which we have everywhere broken in pieces, must be restored, or our bishoprics relinquished." On February 7, 1562, he writes : "Now that the full light of the gospel has shone forth, the very vestiges of error must, as far as possible, be removed together with the rubbish, and, as the saying is, with the very dust. And I wish we could effect this in respect to that linen surplice."<sup>1</sup> Referring to the desire of the Queen that the images of Christ crucified, with those of Mary and John, should be placed in a conspicuous part of the church, Bishop Sandys says that because of his vehemence in this matter "I was near being deposed from my office, and incurring the displeasure of the Queen." He adds : "The Popish vestments remain in our Church ; which, however, we hope will not last very long."<sup>2</sup> Bishop Parkhurst, on August 23, 1560, writing to

<sup>1</sup> See *Zurich Letters*, First Series, pp. 23, 52, 55, 67, 100.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 74.

Bullinger, expresses his envy of the Scots, who (he says) "have made greater progress in true religion in a few months than we have done in many years."<sup>1</sup> Writing later, Bishop Pilkington says: "We endure, I must confess, many things against our inclinations, and groan under them, which, if we wished ever so much, no entreaty can remove. We are under authority, and cannot make any innovation without the sanction of the Queen."<sup>2</sup> Even Bishop Cox writes: "We are all constrained, to our great distress of mind, to tolerate in our churches the image of the cross and Him who was crucified."<sup>3</sup> "The first bishops that were made, and who were but newly returned out of their exile, as Cox, Grindal, Horn, Sandys, Jewel, Parkhurst, Bentham, upon their first returns, before they entered on their ministry, laboured all they could against receiving into the Church the papistical habits, and that the ceremonies should be all laid aside. But they could not obtain it from the Queen and Parliament, and the habits were enacted."<sup>4</sup> As Wakeman says: "They merely tolerated the Prayer-Book with its Catholic teaching and ceremonies for a time out of consideration for the scruples of the Queen, until an opportunity should offer of altering it."

Now if the bishops were so far from being 'contented,' still further were men like Whitehead,

<sup>1</sup> *Zurich Letters*, First Series, p. 91.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 287.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 66.

<sup>4</sup> Strype's *Annals*, vol. i. chap. i. p. 263.

Coverdale, Gilpin, and Sampson, who for conscience sake had refused bishoprics, and who, with the large number who were in sympathy with them, were certainly “advanced reformers.”

**7. Further Reforms Attempted.**—A strenuous effort in favour of other reforms, led by Bishop Sandys and Dean Nowell, was made in the Convocation of 1563. Resolutions designed to make kneeling at Communion optional, to discard copes and surplices and the sign of the cross in baptism, and for the abrogation of saints’ days and festivals, were rejected by small majorities.

**8. The Desire for such Reforms Deep and Widespread.**—But enough has been said to show how deep and widespread was the desire for a more thorough reformation. “There were many learned and pious divines in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth’s reign who, being driven beyond sea,” says Bishop Burnet, “had observed the new model set up in Geneva and other places for the censuring of scandalous persons, of mixed judicatories of the ministers and laity; and these, reflecting on the great looseness of life which has been universally complained of in King Edward’s time, thought such a platform might be an effectual way for keeping out a return of like disorders.”<sup>1</sup> Canon Perry is, therefore, not going too far when he affirms that “the main body of the Elizabethan Bishops were both Calvinists in doctrine and inclined to Presbyterianism in discipline.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Reformation*, vol. ii. Preface.

<sup>2</sup> *Student's English Church History*, vol. ii. p. 291.

**9. It Appears in the Queen's Council, and among the Populace.**—About the Court itself there was an influential party in sympathy with the reformers, including the powerful Earl of Leicester, Sir Francis Knollys, Vice-chamberlain, Cecil, Lord Treasurer, Sir Francis Walsingham, and others. And as to the populace, they were so exasperated by the persecutions under Mary, so inflamed in their hatred of everything savouring of Popery, that even the strong hand of authority could scarcely restrain them from violence. Not only the roods and crucifixes which were taken down by the Commissioners, but the vestments of the priests, copes, surplices, altar-cloths, books, and banners they carried into Cheapside, Paul's Churchyard, and Smithfield, the scenes of the late martyrdoms, and burned them there. They broke the painted windows, and disfigured monuments that had Popish symbols on them.

**10. The Chief Obstacle to Reform.**—Under Elizabeth there was a deeper and more extended sentiment in favour of reform than there was in Edward's time. What prevented its being carried into effect? What was the chief obstacle to a further and more thorough reformation? There is simply no doubt about the answer: the chief obstacle was in the strong will of Elizabeth. “But for its Supreme Governor,” says Dr. Maitland, “the English Church would in all likelihood have carried its own purgation far beyond the degree that had been fixed by the secular legislature.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The *Cambridge Modern History*, vol. ii. p. 590.

What hindered its being conformed to the ‘new models’ set up in Geneva and elsewhere? It was “demonstrated to her [the Queen],” says Bishop Burnet, “that these new models would certainly bring with them a great abatement of her prerogative; since, if the concerns of religion came into popular hands, there would be a power set up distinct from her, over which she could have no authority. This she perceived well, and therefore resolved to maintain the ancient government of the Church.”

**11. The Character of Elizabeth.**—To appreciate the situation we must turn for a moment to Elizabeth herself. Daughter of Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn, she combined in her person and character the qualities of both. From her father she derived a will as resolute as his own; her personal vanity and fondness for pomp and display of all kinds came perhaps from her mother. The unwomanly hardness of her nature found fit expression in a harsh voice, which was like the voice of a man, and in which, without the least delicacy of feeling, she would swear at her ministers, even at her bishops, like a trooper. Wakeman, the high-church historian, makes the singular statement that “in matters of religion Elizabeth was seen at her best.” The oddity of the remark appears from the admission in the same sentence that in any true sense of the word she was not a religious woman at all! What he means is that she was strongly attached to the polity and ceremonial of the Catholic Church, and that Calvinistic methods had no attraction for her.

That she was devoid of genuine religious feeling is conceded by historians generally. "No woman ever lived who was so totally destitute of the sentiment of religion," says Green. "She was almost wholly destitute of spiritual emotion, or of any consciousness of the vast questions with which theology then sought to deal." Brought up under Roger Ascham, she was an excellent Greek scholar, and was fond of exhibiting both her learning and her wit in conversation with her ministers. She was brave and fearless, and capable of hard work ; she was keen of intellect and clever, but, as Wakeman himself admits, she carried lying to the perfection of a fine art. "Nothing is more revolting in the Queen," says Green, "but nothing is more characteristic than her shameless mendacity." Wakeman, who lauds and exalts her on account of her ritualistic proclivities, grants that to the strong grasp she had of affairs she added "craft and unscrupulousness in manipulating them, which sprang from a callous and absolutely selfish heart." With the disimulation which had become a second nature to her she had no difficulty during Mary's reign in conforming to the Popish ritual. Indeed any bit of religious sentiment she had seems to have been connected with that ritual. In spite of all remonstrance she insisted on having in her chapel an altar, with a massive crucifix of silver, and gilt candlesticks with lighted candles ; and she could not understand why people made an ado about such things. "Why make such an ado about the Mass? Cannot you attend it as you

would a play?" she said to the Dutch ambassadors. Only for the urgent remonstrance of Cecil she would have forbidden the marriage of the clergy; and she grossly insulted Mrs. Parker, the wife of her archbishop. Her Protestantism was political. As Bishop Creighton says: "She was a Protestant chiefly because it was impossible for the daughter of Anne Boleyn to take her place as a Catholic sovereign."<sup>1</sup> The Pope had pronounced her illegitimate.

**12. The Form of the English Church Determined by the Will of Elizabeth.**—The ecclesiastical system favoured by her was thus a compromise with the old religion, a compromise which embraced so many elements of mediævalism as have nourished and kept alive so-called Catholicism in the bosom of the Anglican Church ever since. But the thing to be noted is that the Church of England then became, and is to-day, what the strong will of Elizabeth made it; and in giving shape and mould to it she never dreamt of conforming it to the pattern laid down in the New Testament, but was guided by her personal predilections for the mediæval rites and ceremonies, and by political interests and considerations. She made full and unsparing use of the power given her by the Act of Supremacy, which made her "Supreme Governor" of the Church. It was as "Supreme Governor" that she not only stood in the way of the further reformation desired by her best bishops and clergy and people, but made the Church more

<sup>1</sup> *The Age of Elizabeth*, p. 125.

mediaeval and reactionary than it had been under Edward.

**13. The Independent Authority of the Church set at naught by Her.**—A recent historian has here made a very singular assertion. He affirms that Elizabeth “had learned by the experience of her father and brother the mistake of intruding the royal authority into the ecclesiastical sphere, and governing the Church as a department of the State. . . . She was careful to preserve the independent authority of the ecclesiastical power. Nothing could be clearer than the repudiation by Elizabeth of any claim on behalf of her crown to be the source of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. . . . The danger of capricious and arbitrary exercise of the reforming powers of the crown, according to the personal will of the wearer, or the exigencies of policy, was reduced to a minimum.”<sup>1</sup> These statements are not only unsupported by evidence, but are right in the face of the most patent and notorious facts. It is the same writer who admits (p. 312) that the ecclesiastical arrangements were “purely the work of the civil government.” The ‘supreme governorship’ given to her was no dead letter, but a stern reality, which she pushed to its extreme limit. There is no doubt whatever it was she who dictated the reactionary changes in Edward’s Prayer-Book. There was practical unanimity among her bishops against the

<sup>1</sup> Wakeman’s *History of the Church of England*, pp. 307, 308.

vestments and ceremonies, but the Queen insisted on them, and so they were continued. An example of the length to which she carried her royal will was her insertion in the twentieth article of the clause giving the Church power to decree rites and ceremonies, which was not in the copy signed by Convocation, but added by the Queen. Similarly, in 1576, she struck out certain clauses from the regulations which had passed both Houses of Convocation.<sup>1</sup> When Archbishop Grindal refused to suppress the ‘prophesyings’ at the Queen’s dictation, he was suspended from office by her, and remained so till his death. As Bishop Creighton says: “Grindal found to his cost that the royal supremacy was not a mere empty name.” Nor in the carrying out of her arbitrary will did the Queen show her bishops even ordinary respect. She habitually insulted Parker, her archbishop, who was a mere cat’s-paw to her. She kept bishoprics vacant, and appropriated the revenues to her own purpose. When the Bishop of Ely (Cox) was reluctant to surrender the gardens of Ely House, the Queen sent him this peremptory epistle: “Proud prelate, I understand that you are backward in complying with the agreement; but I would have you know that I who made you what you are can unmake you; and if you do not forthwith comply with my request, by G—, I will immediately unfrock you. Yours, as you demean yourself—ELIZABETH.” When the Bishop of London

<sup>1</sup> Wilkin’s *Concilia*, sub anno 1576.

preached before her on the vanity of dress, she told her ladies that "if he held more discourse on such matters, she would soon fit him for heaven, but he should walk hither without a staff, and leave his mantle behind him!" Indeed, after her supremacy and the ecclesiastical arrangements were once established, we shall see that she allowed no further interference even by Parliament in Church affairs. That was her business as 'Supreme Governor.' Any further legislation that was needed was supplied by her through her Court of High Commission!

**14. The Act of Uniformity not Strictly Enforced at First.**—In the earlier years of Elizabeth's reign, however, the ecclesiastical laws were not rigorously enforced. In the services of the parish churches a large amount of freedom was taken by the clergy. In a Report drawn up by the Secretary, Cecil, it is stated: "Some kept precisely to the order of the book, some intermixed Psalms in metre; some say the service and prayers in the chancel, others in the body of the church; some say in a surplice, some without a surplice. In some places the table standeth altar-wise, distant from the wall a yard, in others in the middle of the chancel, north and south; in some places the table hath a carpet, in others it hath not. Some administer the Communion with surplice and cap, some with surplice alone, others with none; some receive kneeling, others standing, others sitting; some baptize in a font, some in a basin; some sign with the sign of the cross, others sign not; some

wear a square cap, some a round cap, some a button-cap, some a hat."

**15. The Queen's Ecclesiastical Drill-Sergeant.**—The Queen heard of these irregularities with indignation, and instructed the archbishops to take measures to secure strict uniformity. No man could be better fitted than Dr. Parker for the work now required of him. He had written on ecclesiastical antiquities, and had the soul of an antiquarian. As a slave to the royal prerogative, and as president of the Court of High Commission, he was a most willing agent in executing the decrees of his royal mistress. Fuller calls him "a Parker indeed, careful to keep the fences, and shut the gates of discipline." This indeed, he says, "was his chief excellence." But though cruel enough in act he was smooth in speech, and was thence nicknamed "Matthew Mealy-mouth"; and to express contempt for the mixture of Catholicism and Protestantism in the policy he lent himself to administer he was called "the lince-wolsey bishoppe."

**16. The 'Advertisements,' and their Results.**—He now proceeded to carry out the Queen's instructions in the spirit of a drill-sergeant. He issued a series of articles called 'Advertisements' (it was in 1566), containing orders and regulations for a stricter conformity to the ceremonies on pain of deprivation. In London alone thirty-seven out of ninety-eight clergy, admitted by Parker himself to be the best ministers in London, refused to comply, and were suspended, and their livings sequestered. Among those who

were now suspended or deprived were the venerable patriarch Miles Coverdale, Bible translator, and Bishop of Exeter under Edward, who was driven from the living of St. Magnus, London Bridge, to wander *pauper et peregrinus*, penniless and homeless, till he died soon after at the age of eighty-one ; David Whitehead, who had declined the archbishoprics of both Armagh and Canterbury ; Dr. Thomas Sampson, who had been offered the bishopric of Norwich, now Dean of Christ's Church ; Dr. Laurence Humphrey, President of Magdalen College, Oxford, and Regius Professor of Divinity ; Thomas Lever, famous both as a scholar and a preacher ; Dr William Turner, Dean of Wells ; and John Foxe, the martyrologist. Puritanism has no reason to be ashamed of such names.

**17. Remonstrance is in Vain.**—Leading reformers on the Continent, such as Gualter and Bullinger of Zurich, and Beza in the name of the Genevan and French divines, wrote to their old friends the bishops, asking them to plead with the Queen on their behalf. And the Scottish General Assembly from Edinburgh earnestly besought the bishops and pastors in England to remember "how tender a thing the conscience of man is," and not to do to others what they would not have others do to them. But such appeals were all in vain. Spies were stationed in every parish, and put under oath to take cognisance of every act of non-compliance.

**18. Many Churches Closed : Preaching Rare.**—The result was that many churches had to be closed even

in London for want of ministers; and in the north the state of matters was still worse. Bishop Sandys, preaching before the Queen, informs her that "many of her people, especially in the northern parts, perished for want of saving food. Many there are that hear not a sermon in seven years, I might safely say in seventeen; their blood will be required at somebody's hands." Of the deprived ministers, some had recourse to secular employments, some went to the Continent, some to Scotland, some became chaplains in private families, but many with their families were reduced to beggary. The deep discontent of the people began to find voice, and to be heard in the Queen's Council. The Secretary Cecil urged the Archbishop to release the prisoners, and supply the churches; but the Archbishop replied that "the Queen had put him upon what he had done," and that it was her will that these 'precise folk' should be imprisoned.

**19. Beginning of Dissent in England.**—At length a number of deprived ministers, after earnest debate, decided that it was their duty to withdraw from the national Establishment, and meet for worship in private houses, as they found opportunity, using Knox's Liturgy already spoken of. They ordained elders, administered the Sacraments, and maintained discipline on Presbyterian lines according to the order of the Geneva Service-Book, meeting in the fields, in ships on the Thames, or in private houses as they were able. Here was the first beginning of Separation or Dissent in England, which might easily have been

avoided had the use of the popish vestments and other obnoxious ceremonies been left discretionary. The leaders of the Seceding Puritans were Colman, Button, Halingham, Benson, White, Rowland, Hawkins, all beneficed clergymen in the diocese of London, and they had many followers.

#### **20. The Abler Puritans Remain in the Church.—**

But the great bulk of the Puritans, including the more able and distinguished among them—men like Humphrey, Foxe, Sampson, Lever, Whittingham, and others already named—although excluded from their livings, determined to continue in communion with the national Church, exercising their ministry where opportunity afforded, and labouring to effect the reformation they desired.

#### **21. The Seceders Arrested and Imprisoned.—**On June 19, 1567, the Seceders hired a room called the Plumber's Hall for a sermon and the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and assembled to the number of a hundred. But the meeting was discovered, broken up by the sheriffs, and most of those present were arrested, and committed to the Fleet and other prisons. In the end thirty-one of them, including seven women, were sent to Bridewell, where they were kept for twelve months.

Here then we see the emergence of Puritanism in England as a distinct movement, which soon grows into national importance.

## CHAPTER II

### A NEW CONSTITUTION DEMANDED

**1. The Controversy Assumes a New Phase.**—The questions in dispute between the advanced reformers on the one side and Elizabeth and her abettors on the other now undergo a change. What the Puritans contended for during the first decade of her reign was that the vestments and superstitious ceremonies should be removed, or at least left discretionary. In the course of that ten years' conflict, however, the conviction was brought home to them that so long as the government of the Church was in the hands of the Queen as 'Supreme Governor,' and her pliant instruments, the bishops, there was no hope of a genuine reform.

**2. Persistent Practical Abuses.**—And in addition to the obnoxious rites and ceremonies a host of practical evils remained unabated. On the expulsion of the Puritans from their benefices many churches had to be content with uneducated mechanics as their clergy, who were held in contempt by the people; and many were not only illiterate but scandalous in their lives, and more or less Popish in their sympathies.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Strype's *Annals*, 138, 177; Collier, 436, 465.  
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Bishop Cox writes to Cecil of "the great ignorance, idleness, and lewdness of the great number of poor and blind priests."<sup>1</sup> In numerous cases livings were held by absentees and pluralists, who drew the income and gave no service. Whitgift himself was Master of Trinity College, Rector of Feversham, Prebendary of Ely, and Dean of Lincoln at the same time. Even in London many churches had to be closed. Preaching was rare. The testimony of Bishop Sandys, preaching before the Queen, has been already cited, to the effect that many of her people "hear not a sermon in seven years, I may safely say in seventeen." The Bishop of Bangor declared that he had but two preachers in all his diocese; and Elizabeth herself told Grindal that three or four were enough for a whole county! Unworthy pastors were thrust on reluctant flocks, and the people had no remedy. The House of Commons in a petition to the Queen in 1571 state that "great numbers are admitted ministers that are infamous in their lives," and the result, they say, is "the common blasphemy of the Lord's name, the most wicked licentiousness of life, the abuse of excommunication, the great number of atheists, the increase of Papists, and the imminent danger of the Protestant religion." While men like Lever, Sampson, and Foxe were deprived and harried, Brook testifies that "thousands of ministers of inferior character, as common swearers, drunkards, and other unholy characters, only because they were ceremonially con-

<sup>1</sup> Strype's *Annals*, Appendix.

formable, enjoyed their livings, and obtained high preferment." Strype says of the higher orders of the clergy, that they "heaped up many benefices upon themselves and resided on none, neglecting their cures; many of them alienated their lands, made wastes of their woods; granted reversion and advowsons to their wives and children, or to others for their use. Churches ran greatly into dilapidations and decays, and were kept nasty and filthy and indecent for God's worship. . . . Among the laity there was little devotion. The Common Prayers not frequented. Some lived without any service of God at all. Many were heathens and atheists. The Queen's own Court a harbour for epicures and atheists, and a kind of lawless place because it stood in no parish."<sup>1</sup> The mode of electing bishops was specially offensive to conscientious, highminded men. A *congé d'écrire*, or permission to elect their bishop, was (and *is*, for the system continues to this day) sent to the Cathedral Chapter, but a letter accompanied it containing the name of the person whom they *must* elect on pain of imprisonment and loss of property; and yet they went (and go) through the form of invoking the Holy Ghost to guide them in their choice!

**3. Wanted a New Church Constitution.**—Now the Puritans, and with them the earnest men of the time, were driven to the conclusion that the corruptions and abuses that prevailed, and the impossibility of

<sup>1</sup> Strype's *Parker*, p. 395.

remedying them, were due to the constitution of the Church, and that what was wanted was a form of Church government at once more scriptural and more effective—the representative form of government afterwards embodied in the British Constitution, and taken from Presbyterianism — government by a Council elected by the governed: the mode of government adopted by all free societies and communities all the world over. And these Puritans were no mere theorisers. They had seen the fruit of the Presbyterian order and discipline on the Continent. Their hearts were wrung with pity over the souls that were perishing in neglect, and over the fearful practical evils which had grown so rank and so rife. They wanted a more faithful ministry, a more effective Church government, a better and holier people; and in order to obtain their desire they now determined on a new and momentous step—*a direct appeal to Parliament.*

**4. Appeal to Parliament.**—But what hope of relief was there in that quarter? There was good ground of hope. The Parliament of 1571 was in full sympathy with their sentiments and desires. Elected at a time when the country was moved both with a dread of Popery and with deep displeasure at the treatment of the deprived divines, the Puritans were quite predominant in it, as indeed they were in all parliaments under Elizabeth and her successors—a proof, as we have already seen, that the great majority of the landed interest and gentry of England were

Puritans, or in sympathy with them.<sup>1</sup> As Hallam says, "Elizabeth and James were the great support of the High Church interest: it had few friends among their Counsellors."

**5. A Church-Reform Bill Proposed.**—Accordingly a Church-reform Bill was brought before the House in 1571 by Mr. Strickland, "a grave and ancient man." He was told by the Queen's Treasurer that "all matters of ceremony were to be referred to the Queen, and that for them to meddle with the royal prerogative was not convenient." Strickland was suspended from sitting in the House. The House at once declared that its privileges had been violated, that such an invasion of its rights by the Crown could not be submitted to without betraying its trust and the liberties of the people, and that that House which had authority to determine the right of the Crown itself was competent to treat of all matters concerning the Church, its discipline and ceremonies. Indeed, this power had been expressly given to it in the Act of Uniformity. Strickland resumed his seat in the House, which, however, was informed that, instead of having ecclesiastical abuses dealt with by Parliament, she would deal with them herself through her bishops under the Royal Supremacy.

**6. Two Acts Passed.**—But, nothing daunted, Strickland continued to move in the same direction, and one Act was passed which admitted ministers presby-

<sup>1</sup> See Hallam's *Constitutional History of England*, quoted in the Introduction to this volume.

terially ordained. Travers afterwards successfully pleaded this statute in defence of the validity of his ordination by the Presbytery of Antwerp, and Grindal habitually acted on it.<sup>1</sup>

Another Act passed in this Session required subscription only to the doctrinal articles, and not to the constitution and ritual of the Church.<sup>2</sup> So that the Puritans were able to show that in being thrust from their benefices, and persecuted and harried, they were being treated illegally by the bishops and the Court.

**7. A Brave Puritan Leader.**—The same spirit appeared in the Session of 1572. A Bill was introduced empowering the bishops to permit their clergy to use other rites and ceremonies than those in the Prayer-Book. The Bill was endorsed by the Treasurer, Sir Francis Knollys, and passed the Commons, but was stopped by the Queen, and Parliament was prorogued. It did not meet again for three years, but when it assembled in 1575, Sir Peter Wentworth, the fearless leader of the Puritans, proceeded to call attention to the interference with their privileges. "There is nothing so necessary for the preservation of the prince and the State as free speech," he said; "and without this it is a scorn and a mockery to call it a Parliament House; for in truth it is none, but a very school of flattery and dissimulation, and so a fit place to serve the devil and his angels in. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Strype's *Grindal*, vi. chap. xiii.

<sup>2</sup> See Hallam's *Constitutional History*, chap. iv.

The king ought not indeed to be under man, but under God and the law; because the law maketh him a king.”<sup>1</sup> A drastic draught this to administer to an absolute Tudor sovereign. Sir Peter was sequestered, and thrown into the Tower; but the Queen dreaded collision with a Power which (thanks to the brave Puritans) was just then beginning to dawn on the consciousness of English rulers—the Power of the People through Parliament; and Wentworth was soon released. The severities, however, were not abated. According to Strype, not less than a hundred clergymen were deprived in the course of 1572; and scholars like Charke, Browning, and Deering were expelled from Cambridge, which was, it is said, “a nest of Puritans.”

**8. The Hour for Concession Past.**—As Hallam justly says: “The hour for liberal concessions had been suffered to pass away; the Archbishop’s intolerant temper had taught men to question the authority that had oppressed them, till the battle was no longer to be fought for a tippet and a surplice, but for the whole ecclesiastical hierarchy, interwoven as it was with the temporal Constitution of England.” The Sovereign had been invested with absolute control over the Anglican Church; and, as Hallam points out, the bishops were reduced to the rank of temporal officers. The Puritans were determined to recover to the Church the right of self-government, and to this end they make their appeal to Parliament.

<sup>1</sup> D’Ewes, *Journals of Parliament*, pp. 157 et seq.

**9. "Admonition to the Parliament."**—A treatise was drawn up by John Field, minister of Aldermanry, London, and Thomas Wilcox, and revised by other brethren, setting forth the abuses and corruptions that prevailed, praying for a Church more consonant with the Word of God and the Reformed Churches, and tracing the outline of such a form. This was the famous "Admonition to the Parliament" in twenty-three sections, with Beza's letter to the Earl of Leicester, and Gualter's letter to Bishop Parkhurst, pleading for further reformation, annexed. It was a very able document and, as Hallam remarks, "made a most important epoch in the contest." And the thing that invested it with so much significance, and made it like a thunderbolt in a calm sky, was the fact that the Parliament to which it was addressed was predominantly Puritan, thoroughly well inclined to listen to it, and concede what it sought.

**10. The Ecclesiastical Dovecots Fluttered by it.**—The fluttering it produced in the hierarchical dovecotes was in fact extraordinary. The most determined efforts were made to suppress it, but edition after edition was issued, and it was read by multitudes. The efforts of Parker to discover the printer, and his peevish complaints were as ludicrous as they were futile. Elizabeth herself was furious, both on account of its subject-matter and because it was addressed to the Parliament and not to her, and she sent forth a Proclamation against it. Its authors, Field and Wilcox, were committed to Newgate, and, after lying

there for four months, were sentenced to a year's imprisonment.

**11. Thomas Cartwright.**—But a new champion now steps into the arena who demands some notice. It is seldom that any great movement in human affairs is long in progress until some able and capable chief emerges, around whom its adherents rally, and who inspires and guides them in their struggles. It was so now with the movement whose fortunes we are following. It found a leader of keen intellect, deep and wide scholarship, great eloquence, thorough honesty of purpose, fervent piety, and irrepressible force and energy of character in a man whom Anglican writers have tried to depreciate or ignore, but who reappears in spite of every effort to suppress him. Probably the most renowned theologian in Europe at that time was Theodore Beza, Calvin's successor at Geneva, and the trusted counsellor of the Huguenots in their memorable conflicts; and Beza, who was an intimate acquaintance of the Puritan leader referred to, says of him, "Than Thomas Cartwright I think the sun doth not see a more learned man." One of the few modern historians who do anything like justice to Cartwright is Froude, who speaks of his emergence at Cambridge as "the apparition of a man of genius." Marsden, in his *History of the Early Puritans*, describes him as "a man whose name belongs to history," to whose importance "an equal testimony is borne in the unbounded eulogy of his admirers, and the less pardonable rancour of his

foes. . . . The heroes of Homer did not contend more fiercely for the dead body of Patroclus than the authors of each succeeding age, themselves the representatives of great principles and powerful parties, have fought for the reputation of this great Puritan divine" (p. 21).

**12. Cartwright at Cambridge.**—Cartwright was born about 1535 in the county of Hertford. At the age of fifteen he was sent by his parents, who were of good social standing, to St. John's College, Cambridge, where he came under the influence of Thomas Lever, then Master of the College, and a Dr. Brill. Nowhere had the growth of Puritanism been more rapid or extensive than in the seats of learning. The seed sown by such men as Bucer at Cambridge and Martyr at Oxford had borne fruit. The largest and most prosperous college in Cambridge at this time was St. John's, which was warmly devoted to the reformed doctrines. In 1565 the students of St. John's to the number of three hundred refused to wear the habits at divine worship, and Trinity followed the example. It is interesting to find the name of Whitgift, who became a most virulent and violent persecutor of the Puritans, attached to a document deprecating any attempt to coerce the vestments, and praying for indulgence.

**13. Rises to Distinction.**—Cartwright, who soon rose to great distinction, became an advanced reformer; and during the Marian persecution he withdrew from Cambridge, and kept terms as a law

student. In 1560, the year after his return, he was chosen a Fellow of St. John's; and three years later he removed to Trinity College, where on account of his remarkable attainments and high reputation he was elected one of the Senior Fellows. During a visit of the Queen he was one of the scholars selected to dispute before her, of whom Roger Ascham said, "There be many goodly plants, as did well appear at the Queen's Majesty's late being there, which are likely to grow to mighty great timber." In 1567 Cartwright took his degree of B.D., and in 1569 was chosen Lady Margaret's Professor of Divinity. His lectures on the Acts of the Apostles drew crowds of auditors, and when he preached in St. Mary's the windows had to be removed to enable those who could not be accommodated within to hear his discourses; and great was the ferment created. Cartwright's sermons were answered by Whitgift on the next Lord's Day, and of their respective performances Fuller says, that "if Cartwright had the better of it in learning, Whitgift had more power to back it, if fewer people to follow him."

**14. Charges Laid against Him.**—At Whitgift's instance, too, special charges were formulated against Cartwright and sent to the Chancellor, Cecil, such as that he had alleged that there was no proper calling or choosing of ministers in the Church. He was prevented from obtaining his D.D., but he had numerous friends at Cambridge. In a communication to the Chancellor, signed by eighteen of the most

celebrated members of the University, they speak of him as “a wonderful ornament of literature,” a “pattern of piety and uprightness,” “well skilled in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew,” in which “he has no superior”; “an ornament and honour of the University, to whom immense multitudes flock daily,” a “client worthy of so great a patron.”<sup>1</sup> The Chancellor took a lenient view of the case, and Cartwright readily agreed to abstain from discussing the disputed matters till order should be taken.

**15. Removed from His Lectureship.**—The Vice-Chancellorship became vacant, and the choice depended on the Regents, whose candidate Cartwright was; but Whitgift, who was a clever intriguer, managed to get the rules changed, and the choice taken from the Regents, with the result that he himself was elected to the Vice-Chancellorship. Cartwright was now summoned before him, and called on to recant his doctrines. His crime was that he held and taught such tenets as these: That the government of the Church ought to be conformed to the apostolic model; that the Christian people should be allowed to choose their own office-bearers; that only those able to preach should be admitted to the ministry; that only canonical Scripture should be read publicly in the church; that equal reverence is due to all Scripture, and that there is no good reason why the people should stand at the reading of the Gospel, or bow at the name of Jesus, any

<sup>1</sup> See Strype's *Annals*, Appendix.

more than other divine names ; that it is lawful to sit at the Lord's Table ; that the sign of the cross in baptism is superstitious ; that parents should present their own child in baptism ; that the words, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," in the ordination of ministers, is presumptuous. Such were some of the "dangerous and seditious" statements culled from Cartwright's lectures, which he was now called upon to recant. Of course he declined to resile from them, whereupon Whitgift, as Vice-Chancellor, pronounced sentence on him, removing him from the lectureship, and inhibiting him from preaching within the University or its jurisdiction. He had already been deprived of his Fellowship.

**16. Withdraws to the Continent.**—He had powerful friends in the Chancellor, Cecil, and the Earl of Leicester, the favourite of the Queen, but he thought it expedient to leave England for the present. It was the autumn of 1571. During his sojourn on the Continent he visited Geneva, made the acquaintance and won the admiration of Beza, and other famous scholars, and is said to have been chosen Professor of Divinity at Geneva. But letters from his friends in England, from Lever, Foxe, and others, came to him urging his return.

**17. Returns to England.**—Yielding to their entreaty, he arrived in England in November 1572, soon after the appearance of the "Admonition." The nation had been perturbed over the possibility of the Queen's marriage with the Duke of Anjou, a

'Papalin,' and a man of dissolute life. Then a similar report was set on foot with regard to the Duke D'Alençon. It is an evidence of Cecil's respect for Cartwright that he sought his opinion on the question, which of course was adverse to such an alliance. It was on account of a book on the same subject, entitled *The Discovery of the Gaping Gulph*, by John Stubbs, that Stubbs was sentenced to have his right hand cut off, a sentence which was executed with brutal barbarity by means of a butcher's knife and mallet, yet such was the loyalty of the brave Puritan that when the right hand was chopped off he waved his hat with the left, crying, "God save the Queen!"

**18. Issues a "Second Admonition to Parliament."**—Cartwright visited Field, Wilcox, and the others in prison, was much moved by their sufferings, and immediately took up what became one of the most famous controversies which English history records, and which drew the attention of all the Reformed Churches. He prepared and issued "A Second Admonition to the Parliament," still bolder and abler than the first, and, as Bancroft said, with "great lightning and thunder as though heaven and earth should have met together." It was the opening of that long debate which shook the fabric of the national Church to its foundations. Unable to destroy and suppress these powerful documents by physical force, Archbishop Parker set Whitgift, assisted by Bishops Cox and Cooper, and others, to write a

reply to Cartwright, which was done with great elaborateness. At the request of his brethren Cartwright again replied in a work entitled, "A Replye to an Answer made by Master Doctor Whitgift against the 'Admonition to Parliament.'" As everything written in defence of the "Admonition" was under the ban of the law, it was under the greatest difficulties that the Puritan treatises were produced; yet this work of Cartwright is admitted on all hands to be "a masterpiece of controversy," and made a deep impression. It was shown that Whitgift's arguments were more cogent for the Church of Rome than for the Church of England; and Ballard, a Romanist, said he would require nothing better to prove the doctrines of the Church of Rome. The bishops, therefore, found it necessary to supplement the argument of the pen by the logic of the prison. A warrant was issued for the apprehension of Cartwright, and early in 1574 he managed once more to escape to the Continent, where he laboured for some eleven years as pastor of the English merchants at Antwerp, and afterwards at Middleburg.

Whitgift published a "Second Answer" of 800 folio pages, and in exile Cartwright prepared and published a "Second Replye" of 660 pages quarto. Meanwhile, the Queen was in no hurry to call together another Parliament.

## CHAPTER III

### PURITAN INSTITUTIONS SET UP

#### SECTION I.—THE PROPHESYINGS

**1. How the Need for Them Arose.**—Reference has been made to the scarcity of preachers in the national Church, to the ignorance of many of the clergy in office as well as of the people at large, and to the crying need there was for some better means of instruction in divine things. The more earnest men of the time felt this deeply, and resolved on a method of supplying, in part at least, what was wanted. At Geneva, at Zurich, and in other Reformed Churches, including that in Scotland, there was an institution known as the ‘Exercises’ or ‘Prophesyings.’ In the twelfth chapter of the ‘First Book of Discipline’ of the Scottish Church, drawn up by Knox and others, it is thus described:—

**2. Explained in ‘First Book of Discipline.’**—“To the end that the kirk of God may have a trial of men’s knowledge, judgments, graces, and utterances; as also such that have somewhat profited in God’s Word may from time to time grow in more full perfection

to serve the kirk, as necessity shall require: it is most expedient that in every town, where schools and repair of learned men are, there be [a time] in one certain day every week appointed to that exercise which St. Paul calls prophesying; the order whereof is expressed by him in these words, ‘Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge; but if any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the former keep silence: for ye may one by one all prophesy, that all may learn, and all may receive consolation. And the spirits,’ that is, the judgments, ‘of the prophets are subject to the prophets’ (1 Cor. 14. 29–32). By which words of the apostle it is evident that in the Church of Corinth, when they did assemble for that purpose, some place of Scripture was read upon the which one first gave his judgment to the instruction and consolation of the auditors; after whom did another either confirm what the former said, or added what he had omitted, or did gently correct or explain more properly where the whole verity was not revealed to the former; and in case things were hid from the one and from the other, liberty was given for a third to speak his judgment to the edification of the Church; above which number of three, as appears, they passed not, for avoiding confusion. This exercise is a thing most necessary for the kirk of God this day in Scotland; for thereby, as said is, shall the kirk have judgment and knowledge of the graces, gifts, and utterances of every man within their body; the simple, and such as have somewhat profited, shall be encouraged daily to

study and to proceed in knowledge, and the whole kirk shall be edified ; for this exercise must be patent to such as list to hear and learn, and every man shall have liberty to utter and declare his mind and knowledge to the comfort and consolation of the kirk."

Suggestions are then given for the guidance and regulation of the 'Exercise,' which, of course, had nothing to do with prediction ; it was a weekday meeting for the exposition of Scripture, and mutual edification, in which not ministers merely, but all church members, might take part, but especially those who had a special gift of knowledge and utterance.

**3. Encouraged by many Bishops.**—Some of the more earnest of the English bishops now began to encourage these 'Exercises,' the advantage of which they had themselves seen among the Reformed Churches. We hear of them first at Northampton, in the diocese of Dr. Scambler, Bishop of Peterborough, who gave his support to them. Froude, in his *History*, gives an interesting account of the 'Exercises' as carried out at Northampton, with the sanction and co-operation of the Mayor and magistrates.<sup>1</sup> And they were soon established in a large number of dioceses, where the bishops were in sympathy with them. It was felt that something of the kind was imperatively called for to meet a crying want of the times. Even Strype, no Puritan, speaks of them as "A very commendable reformation."

**4. Obnoxious to the Queen.**—But the fact that

<sup>1</sup> See Froude's *History of England*, vol. ix. chap. lv.

they brought into the very heart of Prelacy a distinctive feature of the Reformed Churches, introduced the lay element, and set up a sort of organisation within the Church, independent of that established by law, made them obnoxious to those in high authority, especially to the Queen, who, after some time, gave orders to Archbishop Parker to suppress them. The ‘Prophesings’ in the diocese of Norwich, under Bishop Parkhurst, had become specially popular and conspicuous, and Parkhurst was ordered to stop them. He laid the matter before the Privy Council, the members of which encouraged him to persevere in them ; but a peremptory order came from the Queen, through Parker, commanding him to suppress them. He did so very reluctantly, but died soon afterwards (it was in 1575), and Parker himself had to submit to the same inexorable potentate, and was succeeded in the archbishopric of Canterbury by Dr. Grindal.

**5. Grindal Refusing to Suppress Them is Suppressed Himself.**—Grindal, on becoming archbishop, did his best to reconcile the Queen with the ‘Prophesings’ by issuing a set of rules for regulating them. But she was not satisfied, and gave him strict orders to put them down. It was no light thing in those days of absolute power to oppose the imperious will and hot temper of the Queen. But in a remarkable letter he earnestly remonstrated with her Majesty. She had said that three or four preachers were quite enough for a county. He reminds her that preaching is a divine ordinance ; he tells her that the ‘Exercises’

had made the clergy more diligent and studious, and that most of her bishops were in favour of them ; he informs her that such things are not to be determined in a palace, but in a church or synod, that in God's matters princes ought to bow their sceptres to the Son of God, and that he cannot with a safe conscience suppress them ; and he ends by solemnly putting her in mind that she herself, "a mortal creature, must soon appear before the judgment seat of the Crucified."

A short interval of silence followed this noble letter —the noblest probably ever penned by an Archbishop of Canterbury. But at a meeting of the Star-Chamber she ordered him to be deprived. The members of her Council endeavoured to prevent the scandal by interposing on his behalf. It was to little<sup>1</sup> purpose. She insisted on suspending him, and confining him as a prisoner in his house. He refused to move from his position ; and, in spite of numerous petitions in his favour, his suspension and sequestration continued till he died, old and broken in health, in 1583. As to the 'Exercises,' they were stamped out by the iron heel of the Sovereign. She told her bishops that if they did not cause them to cease forthwith she would "reform *them* according to their deserts." They succumbed meekly to the minatory mandate of the Queen !

## SECTION II.—THE PRESBYTERIAN ORDER ERECTED

**1. A Memorable Year.**—The year 1572 is a memorable one in Presbyterian history. It brought a most critical juncture in the progress of the great struggle in the Netherlands; it was the year of that terrible ‘carnival of blood,’ the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, when Admiral Coligny and the Huguenot chiefs, and a multitude of Huguenots, including old men, women, and little children, were slain in Paris and in the provinces of France. This eventful year was signalled in Scotland by the death of John Knox, and by the wolfish rapacity of the nobles who set up the ‘Tulchan’ bishops, and through them grabbed the wealth that should have gone to the poor, to the schools and to the church; but it is specially memorable in the history of English Presbyterianism; for 1572 was not only the year of the two “Admonitions to Parliament,” but that in which the Presbyterian order was actually set up in England—a measure “big with destiny both for a despotic Crown and an oppressive Church, and big with promise both to the civil and the religious liberties of this realm.”<sup>1</sup>

**2. A Presbytery set up at Wandsworth.**—The only record of the event that has come down to us is one which was written “for the express purpose of dis-

<sup>1</sup> The present section is based largely on an article by Professor Lorimer in the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review* for October 1872, from which the above words are quoted.

crediting and defacing the whole movement”—Bancroft’s “Dangerous Positions and Proceedings, published and practised within this Island of Britain under Pretence of Reformation, and for the Presbyterian Discipline.” Bancroft’s book is a very acrimonious and viperous one, and is made up largely from the depositions of spies and informers before the Star-Chamber and High Commission Courts. From this we learn that in 1572 a ‘presbytery,’ consisting of eleven elders, with John Field as minister, was erected at Wandsworth on the Thames. What is meant by the ‘presbytery’ so set up has been misunderstood by Neal in his *History of the Puritans*, by Brook, and Marsden, and others. Its true sense has been brought out by Professor Lorimer in the article referred to. The ‘presbytery’ organised and set up at Wandsworth was what we now call a ‘session.’ It is called over and over again, as Professor Lorimer has shown, a ‘parochial presbytery,’ a ‘congregational presbytery,’ an ‘eldership,’ and a ‘consistory.’ The word ‘presbytery’ continued to be used in this sense down to the time of the Westminster Assembly. The *Puritan Directory* drawn up for Elizabethan Presbyterians, and which is now before me, requires that there should be a ‘presbytery,’ or ‘consistory,’ or ‘senate of elders’ in each congregation. What was set up at Wandsworth, then, was a court of elders, chosen by and from those in the parish who were in sympathy with Field and with Puritan principles, and to co-operate with him in

maintaining a scriptural discipline among them. He was not the incumbent, but only the lecturer of Wandsworth; so that it could only have been by the Puritan parishioners who desired it that elders were chosen, and secretly organised for disciplinary purposes.

**3. The Harbinger and Model of many more.**—And the congregational presbytery organised at Wandsworth became at once the type and the harbinger of many hundreds of similar ‘presbyteries’ or ‘elderships’ that were before long quietly and secretly erected all over England. The earliest and most perfectly organised county was Northamptonshire. Each of its principal towns was the seat of a classis (or presbytery in the modern sense); and a county assembly was held monthly at Northampton, with two delegates from each classis. Fuller, himself a Northamptonshire man, says in his characteristic way that “these classes were more formally settled in Northamptonshire than anywhere else in England; for as the west part of that shire is observed to be the highest in England, as appears by the rivers rising there, and running thence to the four winds, so was that county a probable place, as middest of the land, for the Presbyterian discipline there erected to derive itself into all quarters of the kingdom.”

**4. A Book of Discipline Framed.**—“Into all quarters of the kingdom” it did soon “derive itself”—Warwickshire, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex, and elsewhere. Provincial synods were held at Cambridge and Oxford,

and a great national Assembly was also established. In due time too a very notable Book of Discipline was framed. In 1574 an elaborate and able work on Ecclesiastical Discipline appeared from the pen of Walter Travers. It was written in Latin, but was translated by Thomas Cartwright. On the basis of this work of Travers, a Book of Discipline was drafted by Cartwright and Travers, and after having been carefully examined by Conferences in London and Lancashire, and revised by a General Synod in London, it was accepted, and very widely signed. In 1644 a copy of it, found in the study of Thomas Cartwright, was republished for the benefit of the Long Parliament and the Westminster Assembly of Divines, with this title: "A Directory of Church Government. Anciently contended for, and as farre as the Times would suffer, practised by the first Non-conformists in the daies of Elizabeth. Found in the Study of the most accomplished Divine, Mr. Thomas Cartwright, after his decease; and reserved to be published for such a time as this. Published by authority, 1644." It consists of two parts. The first part is a statement of the principles *necessary for all times*, and derived from Scripture. This part covers only three pages. Of the second part, which is large and detailed, it says that "as farre as it is not expressly confirmed by authority of the Holy Scripture, but is applied to the use and times of the Church as their divers states may require, according to the analogy and general rules of the same Scripture, is to

bee judged profitable for the Churches that receive it, but may be changed in such things as belong not to the essence of the Discipline upon a like godly reason, as the divers estates of the Church may require."

### SECTION III.—PRESBYTERIANISM SET UP IN JERSEY AND GUERNSEY

**1. How They came to be Presbyterian.**—The inhabitants of the Channel Islands, contiguous to Normandy as they were, were of Norman blood ; but when Normandy was recovered from England by France they adhered to England, and for this reason, and because of their close proximity to France, and the possibility of their returning to the allegiance of France, exceptional privileges were granted to them by the English Crown. Normandy was a chief stronghold of French Protestantism ; from Normandy, therefore, they got the Bible, and with the Bible the Reformed principles and literature, and the preachers who confirmed them in the Protestant faith. So it was, too, that in the terrible persecutions that fell upon the Huguenots of France, these islands with their French speech, but English rule, were found a near but safe asylum for the refugees from France, who, being Huguenots, were of course Presbyterians. The Genevan or French forms of service came into use among them. When the Prayer-Book of Edward vi. was drawn up, it was sent them accompanied by an order of the King in Council, expressing an expectation

that they would conform to it; but it was much too Romish for their taste, and they were allowed to continue in their own Presbyterian worship and discipline.

**2. Why Elizabeth Permitted Presbyterian Forms.**—But how would Elizabeth regard the Reformed Church in these islands? Would she harass and persecute its members as she was pursuing and tormenting their co-religionists in England? Oh dear no! She had no regard to either principle or consistency; policy was her guiding star. Astute as she was, and well aware of their proximity to France, and of the danger of alienating their sympathies, she threw her consistency to the winds, and in order to conciliate them and retain them in loyal attachment to England, she felt constrained, although it must have been with a deep grudge and a wry face, to grant them what they sought. After some negotiations, the Presbyterian order was established over all the Channel Islands.

**3. Their Organisation by Cartwright and Snape.**—A disagreement arose between the Presbytery or Colloquy of Jersey and that of Guernsey. It was at this juncture that Cartwright came from Antwerp with another Puritan minister called Snape, who not only effected a reconciliation, but at their own request assisted them in framing a proper Code of Discipline for their churches. This state of things continued till it was overthrown in part by the introduction of the English Canons under James I., and finally by the Act of Uniformity under Charles II. in 1662.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE WHITGIFT TYRANNY

**1. An Anglican Inquisitor.**—On the death of Grindal in 1583 Whitgift was made Archbishop of Canterbury. No man could have been better fitted for executing the arbitrary will of Elizabeth. “There was no danger of his ‘Grindalizing,’” Strype remarks. We have seen a sample of him in his relations with Cartwright at Cambridge. “Of all types of human beings who were generated by the English Reformation,” says Froude, “men like Whitgift are the least interesting. There is something in the constitution of the Establishment which forces them into the administration of it; yet, but for the statesmen to whom they refused to listen, and the Puritans whom they endeavoured to destroy, the old religion would have come back on the country like a returning tide. The Puritans would have furnished new martyrs; the statesmen, through good and evil, would have watched over liberty; but the High Church clergy would have slunk back into Conformity, or dwindled to their proper insignificance.”<sup>1</sup> Whitgift has been

<sup>1</sup> Froude’s *History of England*, vol. ix. p. 348.  
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well called “the Jeffreys of the ecclesiastical bench,” “an Inquisitor as strenuous and merciless as Torquemada.” His hard, narrow, commonplace nature seems to have found its highest enjoyment in inflicting the penal measures inspired and devised by him on men intellectually and morally superior to himself.

The opening of his despotic régime as Archbishop was signalised by two measures equally regardless of law and Constitution.

**2. Whitgift's 'Test Articles.'**—His first step was to issue certain 'Test Articles'—fifteen in all. One of these required that “none be admitted to preach unless he be ordained according to the manner of the Church of England.” The sixth was the most obnoxious of all. It was to this effect: “That none be permitted to preach, read, catechise, minister the Sacraments, or execute any ecclesiastical function unless he consent and subscribe to these articles following before the Ordinary of the diocese, viz.:—

“1. That her Majesty under God hath, and ought to have, the sovereignty and rule over all manner of persons, and in all causes ecclesiastical and civil within her Majesty's dominions.

“2. That the Book of Common Prayer, and of the ordering of bishops, priests, and deacons containeth in it nothing contrary to the Word of God.”

**3. These Unconstitutional and Illegal.**—It was shown by competent lawyers, and indeed obvious even to the lay mind, that the Archbishop had no legal authority to impose these tests—that in fact

they were directly contrary to statute laws. The validity of Presbyterian ordination had (as we have seen) been expressly recognised by statute. Again, by the Acts of Settlement the clergy were (as we have also seen) exempt from signing the hierarchical Constitution, and the ritual of the Church. The Puritans were, therefore, in a position to maintain that the requirements now exacted, and the suspensions that ensued, were grossly illegal and unconstitutional. The immediate result was that large numbers of the best clergy were suspended for refusing to subscribe those articles—sixty-four in Norfolk, sixty in Suffolk, thirty in Sussex, thirty-eight in Essex, a similar proportion in other counties, and a very large number in London, where Puritanism was always exceptionally strong. Deep was the distress into which many families were thrown, and earnest the petitions sent to the Queen and the Archbishop, but in vain.

**4. A New High Commission Court.**—A second step in his career of tyranny was taken by the Archbishop in this same year (1583). At his instance a new High Commission, which might consist of only three members, himself or some other bishop being one, and with powers immensely enlarged, was set up by the Queen. It was empowered to call before it all suspected persons, to make inquisition into all rumours and opinions with respect to them, and to suspend, imprison, deprive them without trial. A jury might be dispensed with. If witnesses were

not forthcoming, the clause “all other ways and means you can devise” enabled them to make use of the rack, ‘little ease’—a narrow, triangular hole in the Tower, in which the prisoner had to sit bent down with his head upon his knees—and the solitary dungeon. But the most fiendish device was the oath *ex officio mero* to which the suspected person was subjected. By means of twenty-four interrogatories, devised with devilish ingenuity, it was sought to make the victim incriminate himself.<sup>1</sup>

**5. The Ex Officio Oath.**—Even in view of the arbitrary ways and methods of Elizabeth this tribunal was felt to be palpably unconstitutional. The oath *ex officio mero* was regarded with special abhorrence, as alike contrary to the instincts of nature and the laws of nations. It is a universally accepted maxim that no one is bound to accuse or incriminate himself. Even pagan emperors refused to employ such a contrivance, and countermanded it when their proconsuls or inferior magistrates attempted to employ it against the primitive Christians. The Lord Treasurer, Lord Burleigh, denounced it as “savouring of the Roman Inquisition”; nay, he said, “the Inquisition of Spain used not such questions to entrap their prey.” The Lords of the Council wrote the Archbishop in behalf of the deprived ministers, in whose places, they say, “persons neither of learning nor good name are appointed; great numbers of persons who occupy

<sup>1</sup> See the twenty-four articles in Neal’s *History*, i. 331.

cures are notoriously unfit, most for lack of learning, many chargeable with great and enormous faults, as drunkenness, filthiness of life, gaming at cards, haunting alehouses, etc., against whom they heard of no proceedings, but that they were quietly suffered.” This letter is signed by Lord Burleigh, the Earls of Warwick, Shrewsbury, and Leicester, Lord Charles Howard, Sir James Crofts, Sir Christopher Hatton, and Sir Francis Walsingham. But the remonstrance was unheeded.

**6. The Privy Council and the Parliament Flooded with Petitions.**—The dissatisfaction was profound and widespread. The Privy Council was flooded with petitions. The only result was the concession of a conference between Whitgift and Bishop Cooper on the one side and Travers and Sparkes on the other. It lasted for two days; but ended in nothing.

In the meantime, the zeal of the Puritans was only intensified by the violence of the persecutions; and the Discipline was spreading on every side. In 1584 Parliament was deluged with petitions. A strong measure for the “reformation of the Church” was brought forward, but the opposition of the Queen blocked it. A remarkable petition to her Majesty was drawn up by the House itself, praying that presbyters should be put on a level with bishops in the matter of ordination, that no minister should be settled in a parish without the consent of the people, that the ‘Exercises’ should be restored, the suspensions cancelled, and the illegal subscriptions

abolished.<sup>1</sup> Whitgift was terrified for a little, but soon recovered himself. A “supplication” from the Norwich men to the Queen craved that as she had removed the *doctrine* of Antichrist she should complete her work by removing the *government* of Antichrist, and by planting that eldership so plainly described in Scripture, by removing a dumb ministry, and placing in their stead a ministry chosen by the people.

Among those who now suffered under Whitgift's tyranny were the two Puritan leaders, Cartwright and Travers.

**7. Cartwright among the Sufferers.**—It was in the summer of 1585 that Cartwright returned to England after an exile of eleven years. To repair his shattered health his physicians advised him to return to his native air. Both the Earl of Leicester and Lord Burleigh pleaded with the Queen on his behalf. But there was a large strain of the vixen in her nature, and she refused to permit his return. At last, however, the state of his health compelled him to venture over. A generous foe would have commiserated the condition of a man so endowed and of such elevated character, and would have found pleasure in alleviating it. But in the small nature of Aylmer, now Bishop of London, and in the vixenish spirit of the Queen, there was no room for magnanimity; and so the moment Cartwright arrived he was pounced on,

<sup>1</sup> D'Ewes, *Journals of Parliament*, p. 339; Strype's *Whitgift*, bk. iii. chap. x.

arrested, and thrown into prison. To justify himself Aylmer announced that the arrest and imprisonment were “by her Majesty’s commandment.” For this betrayal of the part she had taken Aylmer got a sound wigging at her hands, and with incredible cringing servility he humbled himself before her, and besought Burleigh to appease her displeasure. After some time, through the influence of the Earl of Leicester and his brother, the good Earl of Warwick, Cartwright was liberated, and by the latter was made Warden of the Warwick Hospital, where, as it was exempt from episcopal jurisdiction, he was able to fulfil his ministry without a licence, and where in comparative peace he was enabled to spend the closing years of his life.

**8. Travers also a Victim.**—Walter Travers was, at the time in question, domestic chaplain to Lord Burleigh, and Lecturer at the Temple, offices which he could hold without subscription of the Whitgift Articles. Fuller says of him that if Cartwright was ‘the *Head*,’ Mr. Walter Travers was “the *Neck* of the Presbyterian party; the second in honour and estimation.” A graduate and distinguished scholar of both Cambridge and Oxford, he had been ordained in Holland, and acted for a time as assistant to Cartwright in the English congregation at Antwerp. The Master of the Temple was the celebrated Richard Hooker. Though as a writer Hooker rose to a higher reputation, as a speaker Travers, who was allied to Hooker by marriage, was much more effec-

tive. Fuller quaintly says of them that the audience "ebbed in the morning, and flowed in the afternoon." "Mr. Hooker : his voice was low, stature little, gesture none at all ; standing stone-still in the pulpit, as if the posture of his body were the emblem of his mind, immovable in his opinions. Where his eye was left fixed at the beginning, it was found fixed at the end of his sermon : in a word, the doctrine he delivered had nothing but itself to garnish it. His style was long and pithy, driving on a whole flock of several clauses, before he came to the end of a sentence ; so that when the copiousness of his style met not with proportionate capacity in the audience, it was unjustly censured for being perplexed, tedious, and obscure. . . . Mr. Travers : his utterance was graceful, gesture plausible, manner profitable, method plain, and his style carried in it *indolem pietatis*, a genius of grace flowing from his sanctified heart." "The pulpit," he says, "spoke pure Canterbury in the morning, and Geneva in the afternoon."

**9. Travers becomes Provost of Trinity.**—Although Whitgift had himself pursued a like course at Cambridge in replying to Cartwright, he now found in it an excuse for silencing and removing Travers. Debarred from preaching anywhere in England, Travers was brought over to Ireland by Archbishop Loftus, who had been his fellow-student at Trinity College, Cambridge, and through Lord Burleigh, who was Chancellor of the new University, was made Provost of Trinity College, Dublin. Loftus himself had held

the Provostship in a provisional and honorary way : Travers was the first regular Provost. James Ussher, afterwards the famous archbishop, was one of his favourite and attached pupils.

**10. The Brownists.** — The violent and illegal methods of Whitgift naturally drove some to extreme courses. A party now began to form, called Brownists, who refused to recognise the Church of England as in any sense a true Church, or her ministers as true ministers, or her Sacraments and ordinances as valid. They went in for complete separation from the national Establishment, and denounced the Presbyterian Puritans who continued in connection with it. They were the first to announce the principle of Congregationalism or Independency —the principle that each congregation has all the power of government within itself. Another distinctive tenet of theirs was the unlawfulness of all prescribed forms of prayer. The Presbyterians desired room for free prayer, but did not oppose all prescribed forms.

**11. Robert Browne.** — The founder and leader of the Brownists was Robert Browne, from whom they took their name. He was nearly related to the Lord Treasurer, Burleigh, but was an erratic, passionate, self-willed man, of considerable talent, who went about denouncing in the most unmeasured language the Church and her ceremonies, and all who continued in communion with her. He was able to boast afterwards that he had been committed to thirty-two

prisons. He and his followers were at length driven from England, and went to Holland, but dissensions soon broke out among them. Browne himself returned to England, united again with the Church he had forsaken, but, according to Fuller, lived an idle and dissolute life.

**11. The Sufferings of the Brownists.** — But although Browne himself was false to the cause, his views were adopted and extended by others. In 1583, two ministers, Elias Thacker and John Copping, who with others had long lain in prison without being brought to trial, were hanged at St. Edmundsbury for circulating Browne's writings. Many were kept in durance for years without trial. In a petition to the Lords of the Council we find these prisoners complaining that some of them had been kept in gaol for four or five years without being tried, that some of them had been laden with irons, some beaten with cudgels, immured in loathsome dungeons where they had to herd with the vilest, and where, says Neal, they "died like rotten sheep, some of the diseases of the prison, some for want, others of infectious distempers." "If we deserve death," said one of them, Barrowe, "let us not be closely murdered, yea starved to death with hunger and cold, and stifled in loathsome dungeons." He says that in six years seventeen or eighteen persons had perished in these noisome prisons. One of these was Roger Ripon, on whose coffin his fellow-sufferers put this inscription: "This is the corpse of Roger Ripon, a servant of Christ, and

her Majesty's faithful subject, the last of sixteen or seventeen which that great enemy of God, the Archbishop of Canterbury, with his High Commissioners, have murdered in Newgate, within these five years, for the testimony of Jesus Christ."

**12. The Cause Extended Thereby.**—The sufferings thus inflicted had the effect which persecution is apt to have—they only served to extend the cause they were meant to stamp out; so that by 1592 Sir Walter Raleigh could announce in Parliament that the Brownists or Separatists numbered not less than 20,000. Some of the most distinguished of them met a fate preferable to slow death in the dungeon—execution on the gallows as felons.

**13. The Martyrdom of Barrowe, Greenwood, and Penry.**—Henry Barrowe was a barrister of Gray's Inn, a gentleman of good family, a learned and earnest man, the ablest leader of the Brownists. He wrote *A Brief Discovery of False Churches*, which combined Independency and Presbytery. He and John Greenwood, co-pastor of a congregation in London, were first imprisoned in the Clink, an old London prison, for reading Scripture in the house of a friend on the Lord's Day; and afterwards removed to the Fleet. At length they were indicted for publishing seditious writings (that is, writings which exposed the abuses of the Establishment), and were of course convicted and condemned to death. They were executed at Tyburn on 6th April, 1593. And six weeks later John Penry was executed for the same crime. Penry was a

Welshman. He had been educated at both Cambridge and Oxford, and devoted himself to the work of preaching the gospel to his fellow-countrymen, then in a state of ignorance and neglect. He too wrote in favour of the reformation of abuses in the Church.

**14. Martin Marprelate.**—The Puritans, as we have seen already, made large and effective, although it had to be secret, use of the Press in the dissemination of their views. The control of the Press was already in the hands of the bishops; but Whitgift determined to restrict and gag it still more. By means of a Star-Chamber decree the control of it became more concentrated and organised. Printing was confined to London and the two Universities, and every publication had to receive the approval of the Primate or the Bishop of London. The great controversial writings of Cartwright, Travers, and others had to be printed in secret, or on the Continent, and circulated surreptitiously. But the first fruit of Whitgift's attempt to restrict and muzzle the Press was very different from what he intended—a more damaging use of it than ever. There began to appear a series of pamphlets bearing the significant *nom de plume* of “Martin Marprelate,” and exposing in a very trenchant and pungent way the weak points and abuses in the bishops and their system. They were rough, scurrilous, and vituperative, but often powerful, sparkling with caustic wit and biting satire, and admirably calculated to catch and titillate the popular ear; and they now assailed the ecclesiastics, and especially the bishops,

as with showers of fiery hail. Not less than forty such pamphlets issued in rapid succession from a secret press, which kept moving among the houses of the country gentry, and which Whitgift's myrmidons tried in vain to discover. Who the writers were has always been much debated. The persons chiefly suspected at the time were John Penry, Job Throgmorton, described by Camden as "a man of learning, and master of a facetious and satirical vein," Henry Barowe, and John Udall ; but no satisfactory evidence against them was forthcoming. It is now thought probable that Penry, Throgmorton, and the printer Waldegrave were chiefly concerned in them. It is clearly established that the Presbyterians or Puritans proper had no part in them, although they were made to suffer on account of them.

Whitgift and his friends were driven desperate by the keen shafts that pierced them, and came they knew not whence. A warrant was issued for the arrest of Penry, one of those suspected of the authorship. He fled to Scotland in 1590 and remained there till 1593. In the latter year he drew up a petition to the Queen, asking permission to preach the gospel in his native country, and referring to certain abuses in the Church. Coming to England to present it with his own hand, he was arrested, arraigned, found guilty, and executed in the same month. The first signature attached to the warrant for his execution was that of Whitgift.

**15. John Udall the Presbyterian Martyr.**--Even more cruel still was the case of John Udall, the

Presbyterian martyr. Udall was a Master of Arts of Cambridge, and one of the most learned men of his time. He laboured as a beneficed clergyman at Kingston-on-Thames, and as a writer of religious books. In 1588 he was deprived of his living on account of his Puritan sentiments. Called before the High Commission, he was charged with libels said to have been contained in two anonymous treatises, one entitled *Diotrepes*, a pungent dialogue on the administration of the prelates, and the other *A Demonstration of the Truth of the Discipline which Christ hath Prescribed in His Word*. No proof was given that he was the author of either. Questioned on the subject before the High Commission, he refused to answer, but denied that he had any hand in the Marprelate tracts. The refusal was taken as a proof of guilt. The *ex officio* oath was submitted to him, but he declined to take it. Having lain in prison for many months, he was brought "with fetters on his legs" to the Surrey Assizes on a charge of treason-felony. His alleged, but unproved, attack upon the bishops was construed into treason against the Queen! Counsel was refused him. Not a single witness was produced in court against him. He was not permitted to bring forward exculpatory evidence. Of course he was convicted, but the sentence was deferred. At the Lent Assizes in 1591 the death sentence was pronounced, but before it was executed he died in the Marshalsea prison. Sir Walter Raleigh pleaded with the Queen on his behalf; and so did

King James from Scotland. On being told of his fate, the King exclaimed, "By my sal, then, the greatest scholar in Europe is dead." Hallam, one of the most self-restrained of writers, declares that the trial of Udall "disgraces the name of English justice," and that his conviction was "one of the gross judicial iniquities of Elizabeth's reign."

**16. Banishment from the Kingdom.**—Even Whitgift began to feel that he was carrying things with too high a hand. Banishment from the kingdom was therefore substituted for imprisonment and death. Never in the world's history was an act pregnant with greater consequences, or with results more contrary to the intention of its authors! Among those banished from the kingdom were Johnston and Ainsworth, and Smith and Helwys and Brewster and John Robinson, the most lustrous name in the history of Congregationalism, and its true father, a man of great breadth of mind and elevation of spirit. It was his congregation at Leyden that was the mother church of the Pilgrim Fathers. What Elizabeth and Whitgift meant by the banishment of such men was to get rid of these troublers of the Anglican Israel and to make their own arbitrary government permanent. What they really did was to plant nurseries of freedom in Holland that would yet be fatal to absolutism, nurseries that would send strong, brave men across the Atlantic to sow in a colder yet more genial soil seeds out of which a new world, and a great and free and renowned Commonwealth should grow!

## CHAPTER V

### PURITANISM A BULWARK AGAINST PAPAL AGGRESSION: THE INVINCIBLE ARMADA

**1. Roman Catholic League.**—A League had been formed among Roman Catholic princes for the extirpation of Protestantism. The Pope, the Kings of Spain, France, and some minor rulers were concerned in it. Their object was to depose Protestant sovereigns and put Roman Catholic rulers in their place. A manifesto was issued declaring that subjects were not bound to recognise a prince who was not a Catholic. It was under the auspices of this League that the war was carried on in the Netherlands. The Protestants in the Netherlands sought the aid of Elizabeth, but help was given by her with great reluctance, and only so far as political or commercial exigencies compelled her.

**2. Elizabeth reluctantly Helps the Dutch.**—When, however, the conflict reached a crisis in the capture of Antwerp by the Prince of Parma, when Philip II. had, through certain internal complications, secured France, and it seemed that he would soon be able to make a concentrated attack on England,

Elizabeth was forced, much against her will, to give the Protestant patriots in the Netherlands some assistance. She agreed to furnish 5000 foot and 1000 horse, and the Earl of Leicester, who was neither wise as a politician nor skilled as a general, was sent as their leader. It was at a battle fought at the siege of Zutphen in the course of this campaign that Leicester's nephew, Sir Philip Sidney, the memory of whose noble and elevated character is one of the most precious assets of English history, and who is said to have been "the common rendezvous of worth in his time," received his death wound. Leicester did little for the Netherlanders; and even while her troops were in Holland fighting against him, Elizabeth was characteristically engaged in negotiations with Philip, which would have sacrificed her Dutch allies. Happily they came to nothing.

**3. Sir Francis Drake.**—A much more effective service in harassing and crippling Spain than that of Leicester was done by Sir Francis Drake. Drake was a Devonshire man, who when quite a youth had engaged with a shipmaster trading to the Channel ports, and soon made a reputation as a capable and expert seaman. He was a near relative of Sir John Hawkins, whose daring exploits in the West Indies had made him famous. Having procured a ship of his own, Drake joined his kinsman, Hawkins, and shared in some of his most daring adventures. One of his most renowned achievements was his voyage round the world in a sloop of 100 tons, which he

called the *Dragon*, accompanied by two small pinnaces, a voyage in which he passed round Cape Horn, then up the western coast of America, and across the Pacific and Indian Oceans, and passed the Cape of Good Hope homewards—a voyage in the course of which he seized and carried off an enormous quantity of booty in the shape of gold, jewels, and wealth and treasure of various kinds from Spanish towns in South America, and from Spanish treasure-ships, which he seized and plundered.

**4. Preparation of the Spanish Armada.**—The phlegmatic Philip, spurred and exasperated by such means, now determined on carrying out the purpose which he has long been meditating of a great naval invasion of England both from Spain and the Netherlands. He expected the English Roman Catholics to rise on behalf of Mary, Queen of Scots; Elizabeth would be disposed of; and Parma might marry Mary, and govern England in the interest of Spain and the Pope. Such was the programme. He has already begun his preparations. Every dockyard in Spain was busy. At Lisbon, at Cadiz, at Barcelona, at Naples and elsewhere his shipwrights were hard at work. The harbour of Cadiz especially was full of provision-ships, powder vessels, transports, being laden with stores for the Armada.

**5. Execution of Mary Stuart.**—Meanwhile, a conspiracy hatched in the Roman Catholic seminary at Rheims, and committed to Anthony Babington to carry out, had for its object the assassination of

Elizabeth, and the setting of Mary Stuart on the English throne by Spanish help. Mary's complicity in the plot was proved by her own correspondence. She was found guilty by a Commission of forty-six Privy Councillors and noblemen, and paid the penalty with her life in the hall of Fotheringay Castle on February 8, 1587. A weight was thereby lifted from men's minds, and they breathed more freely. The greatest peril to the security of Elizabeth lay in the person of Mary. But Philip's determination to invade England was not relaxed but strengthened by Mary's death; for she had bequeathed to him her claims on the succession to the English throne.

**6. Drake Singes King Philip's Beard.**—Drake, of course, was well aware of the preparations which were proceeding in Spanish ports. In the Queen's ship, the *Buonaventura*, with twenty-five or thirty privateers, the sturdy Protestant sea-rover sailed from Plymouth, to have a look round the Spanish coast, and, should opportunity offer, bent, as he himself put it, on "singeing King Philip's beard." Having reached Cadiz, whose harbour, as we have just seen, was full of provision-ships and transports, Drake's fleet passed the batteries amid a hurricane of shot, sank the guardship, searched at leisure all the vessels, carried off everything of value, cut the cables, set the hulls on fire, and did an amount of damage which "a million ducats and a year's labour would imperfectly replace." After various exploits he ended by capturing one of the largest of the Spanish ships laden with treasures from

the Indies, and with this rich prize he returned to Plymouth.

**7. Preparation of the Armada Delayed but Continued.**—For three years Spain was engaged in elaborate preparation for the great attack. From the East and West Indies, from the mines of Mexico and Peru, gold and wealth of all kinds had been pouring into the coffers of the Spanish King, to be spent on the gigantic navy now being made ready in the Spanish shipyards, and which at length numbered about 150 great galleons, galeases, and galleys, with squadrons of smaller vessels. The galleons were huge oval-shaped vessels, built fore and aft in the form of a castle. The galeases were still larger. For spectacular effect nothing could be more imposing than these immense structures; for the navigation of stormy seas and for war-purposes nothing worse could have been invented. Too top-heavy for the draught below, too cumbrous for rapid movement, they made a splendid target for the enemy. The mighty fleet was manned by 9000 sailors, 3000 galley-slaves for rowing, and a force of 21,855 soldiers, with 3165 pieces of cannon, and an immense company of Jesuits, friars, and priests to stimulate the soldiers, and to convert the English as soon as they had overcome them, with many officers of the Inquisition armed with instruments of torture, and a large assortment of missals, rosaries, relics and bones of dead saints!

**8. The Duke of Parma to Co-operate.**—To co-

operate with the Armada a grand army was mustered in the Netherlands under the Duke of Parma, composed of some 60,000 veterans. The King had indeed forgotten to provide the means of transporting them to England, and at the last moment the Flemish forests had to be transformed into flat-bottomed boats for the purpose, unfit either to resist a storm or an attack by armed vessels.

**9. The Invincible Armada puts to Sea.**—In the middle of May 1588, the magnificent “Invincible Armada” put out to sea under the command of the Duke Medina Sidonia, who bewailed the fate that put him in chief command, and averred that he wished no harm to any one! It was soon found that the water had been put on board three months before, and was foul and fetid, the meat was putrid, and the bread full of maggots, and before long hundreds were ill with dysentery. The fleet was scattered by a storm, many ships disabled, and they had to put in to Corunna to repair.

**10. How is it in England?**—While they are waiting we may ask—How was it in England? What preparation was being made for the stupendous invasion? The population of London was about 150,000, and the population of England did not number altogether four millions and a half. The coast of England was much exposed, with a few crumbling forts here and there, far apart from one another. The regular army was not more than half the present metropolitan police force of London, but the Earl of Leicester

and others undertook to organise and increase it. The entire English navy mustered thirty-four ships, with 6279 seamen and 837 guns. Lord Howard was in command as Admiral, Drake as Vice-Admiral, and Hawkins as Rear-Admiral. They would have to depend largely on the commercial marine. Remember, too, that half the population of England was Roman Catholic, that the Pope had absolved them from allegiance, had deposed Elizabeth, and promised a large subsidy to Philip. The case for England looked hopeless enough. But no peril threatened to be so fatal as the refusal of Elizabeth to believe that Philip intended a serious invasion of England. With consummate duplicity the Duke of Parma carried on peace negotiations with her to the last moment.

**11. The Spirit of the English People.**—At length the Queen was undeceived. The words in which Motley describes the effect in England are memorable: "When the great Queen aroused herself from the delusion into which the falsehoods of France and of Philip had lulled her, to represent the defiance of England to foreign insolence—the resolve of a whole people to die rather than yield—there was a thrill of joy through the national heart. When the enforced restraint was at length taken off, there was one bound toward the enemy. Few more magnificent spectacles have been seen in history than the enthusiasm that pervaded the country, as the great danger, so long deferred, was felt at last to be closely approaching. The little nation of four millions, the

Merrie England of the sixteenth century, went forward to the death grapple with its great antagonist as cheerfully as to a long-expected holiday. Spain was a vast empire, overshadowing the world ; England in comparison but a province ; yet nothing could surpass the steadiness with which the conflict was awaited." Not London merely, but almost every English port along the Channel sent its contribution in ships and men.

**12. Tactics of the English Fleet.**—When, on the 20th July, 1588, the English fleet got their first sight of the Armada from the Plymouth roads, the vast armament, now numbering 160, spread over the Channel in the form of a crescent, whose horns were seven miles apart. The tactics of the English were to keep in the rear of the Spanish fleet, harass it, cut off the stragglers, and, as they put it, "to pluck the feathers of the Spaniard one by one." When the Spanish Admiral decided to engage them, to his amazement the English ships swept round the Spanish, and poured their broadsides into the great galleons, crowded with troops, with disastrous effect. The Duke, in confusion, signalled to bear up the Channel, leaving the *Capitana*, with Don Pedro, one of the ablest commanders, with 500 men on board, a large sum of money, a good supply of powder, and a box of jewel-hilted swords sent by Philip for the English Catholic peers, to fall into the hands of Drake. The English fleet was rapidly increasing as it passed up the Channel. Its brisk and incessant

fire began seriously to cripple the Armada, and other rich prizes fell into its hands.

**13. English Stratagem.**—When the Spaniards reached Calais, the British Admirals decided that the time had come for more determined action. It was vital for the English that an engagement should take place before the Spaniards met the Prince of Parma at Dunkirk ; but as to attack them in French waters might offend the French, they had recourse to stratagem to make them shift their quarters. Eight of their oldest and most useless vessels were covered with pitch, and sent as fire-ships amongst the Spanish fleet. The wind being favourable, they were already in the midst of the Spaniards when suddenly they “broke into flame from waterline to topmast.” Thrown into a panic, the whole Spanish fleet slipped their cables and stood out to sea. This was precisely what the English desired. Their ships pursued, poured an incessant hail of musketry and round shot on the Spanish vessels, sweeping round them, and driving them in upon one another. The supply of powder was scanty, but it was not spared.

**14. Disaster to the Armada.**—For hours the battle raged, but the damage was all on one side. The Spanish shot went high over the low English hulls. Towards the afternoon the Spanish fire slackened ; their powder was exhausted. The English, through the stinginess of their Queen, were in like case. A few of the Spanish ships drifted towards the Dutch coasts and were wrecked. Through the night the

wind rose, the storm grew into a gale, and the gale into a tempest which completed the overthrow which the English had begun. Ten thousand Spaniards were already dead or dying. Their ships were driven by the storm into the North Sea, many of them to perish on the Scottish coasts, but after being carried round the Hebrides, some thirty or forty ships were wrecked upon the shores of Ireland. Nearly 10,000 Spaniards perished between the Giants' Causeway and the Blaskets. One ship, containing, it is said, the flower of the Spanish nobility, foundered on a reef off Dunluce. Eleven hundred corpses were counted on the strand in Sligo Bay. Only a miserable remnant of fifty-three ships out of the immense "Invincible Armada," and 9000 men out of 30,000, already smitten with disease, pestilence and death, found their way back to Spain.

**15. Puritanism made the Defeat Possible.**—It may be asked why, in a history of Puritanism, I have dwelt at such length on the defeat of the Armada? The answer is—Just because it was Puritanism that made that defeat possible. As Froude has it, "the force, the fire, the enthusiasm of the movement that ended in the defeat of the Armada came from the Puritans, from men of the same convictions as the Calvinists of Holland and Rochelle." The testimony of the Jesuit Parsons has been already referred to: "The enemies that we shall have to deal with are the more determined heretics whom we call Puritans, and certain creatures of the Queen, the Earls of

Leicester and Huntingdon, and a few others," he says.<sup>1</sup> "The battle was fought at sea by a fleet four-fifths of which was composed of Protestant adventurers, fitted out and manned by those zealous Puritans whose fidelity to the Queen Parsons himself admitted," Froude adds (p. 157). The sea-going population of England had suffered in Spanish harbours from the Holy Office of the Inquisition; and stories were brought back to England how one and another had been tortured, flung into prison, set to work in the galleys, burned at an *auto da fé*. Cecil mentions that in one year—1562—twenty-six Englishmen had been burnt at the stake in different parts of Spain, and ten times as many, according to Froude, were starving in Spanish dungeons. Thus there grew up in the sea-going population an enthusiasm of hatred for the Holy Office, and a passionate desire for revenge.

**16. The Armada the Supreme Effort of the Roman Catholic Reaction.**—The shattering and scattering of the "Invincible Armada" marked a decisive moment not only in the history of England but of Europe. It not only broke the supremacy of Spain as a naval power, and signalled the rise of England into first-class importance: the organisation and equipment of the Armada for the conquest of England and its subjection to Rome was the supreme effort of the Roman Catholic reaction to annihilate Protestantism. Its own annihilation instead was a mortal blow to all

<sup>1</sup> Froude's *English Seamen*, etc., p. 153.

hopes of that kind. The overthrow of the Armada had an important influence also on the Puritan struggle. Hitherto Puritanism was much succoured by the dread of Roman Catholic aggression which inspired the best part of the English nation. Now that that dread was past, many grew less strenuous, more relaxed in their struggle against sacerdotalism, less insistent in their demands for a further reformation.

It might have been hoped, too, that after such a life-and-death grapple, crowned by a signal victory in which the Puritans were the chief factors, some better consideration would be shown them than they had yet had. It was not so. The oppressive tyranny of Whitgift though modified was in no way abated. As we saw at the end of last chapter, a policy was adopted whose design and effect were to banish not a few of England's best sons from the kingdom, and to consign them to perpetual exile. But we shall hear of them again.

## CHAPTER VI

### PURITANISM IN THE HIGHER LITERATURE

#### 1. Educational and Social Status of the Puritans

**Recalled.** — How numerous and influential the Puritans were in the Universities has been already noted. It is beyond question, too, that they constituted at once the best educated and the most devoted portion of the clergy. “The majority of the clergy,” says Hallam, referring to the times of Elizabeth, “were quite illiterate, and many of them addicted to drunkenness and low vices.” “The Puritans,” he says again, “formed so much the more learned and diligent part of the clergy that a great scarcity of preachers was experienced throughout this reign in consequence of silencing so many of the former. Thus, in Cornwall, about 1578, out of 140 clergymen not one was capable of preaching. And, in general, the number of those who could not preach, but only read the service, was to the others nearly as four to one.”<sup>1</sup> The Puritans, too, as we have seen, predominated in the Parliament, which was composed mainly of the landed gentry and the more educated

<sup>1</sup> *Constitutional History*, chap. iv. note.

classes of the time. It need not surprise us, then, to find them represented in the higher literature of the Elizabethan age.

**2. Richard Hooker.**—It would be unjust, indeed, to pass by without mention the name of Richard Hooker, by far the most distinguished champion of Anglicanism in the period under consideration, a name that belongs indubitably to the higher literature. The first four of the eight books of his *Ecclesiastical Polity* were published in 1594. The first book especially, which treats of law in general, is of permanent value. The others, which go more into detail, and are more controversial in character, are less weighty. Hooker's central position was that the Church, like other societies, is invested with power to make laws for its well-being, that although the Scriptures are a perfect standard for doctrine, they are not a rule of discipline or government, that, therefore, in this and other departments we must have recourse to the reason of things and to general considerations.

**3. Wherein His Positions are Weak.**—The positions taken by him are open to two vital and indeed fatal objections. 1. They may be and, as a matter of fact, have been adduced in support of the Church of Rome, and apply equally to Roman Catholicism as to Anglicanism. “It is well known,” says Hallam, “that the Preface to the *Ecclesiastical Polity* was one of the two books to which James II. ascribed his return to the fold of Rome; and it is not difficult to perceive by what course of reasoning on the positions it con-

tains this was effected.”<sup>1</sup> 2. The appeal to the nature of things, and to general considerations of reason and equity, on which Hooker lays such stress, can be made in favour of the form of government advocated by the Puritans with much more effect than it can in favour of the Anglican form. The form of Church government adopted in principle by the Apostles, and desiderated by the Puritans, may be briefly described as “government by a council elected by the governed”; that is, the *representative* form of government; the form of self-government everywhere adopted by free communities of men; the form of government whose principles have been embodied in the British Constitution; not an autocratic or despotic rule which imposes its authority on the Church, but a polity which, representing the mind of the Christian community itself, is specially adapted to the genius of a spiritual society which is at once the nursery and the home of freedom; which secures “superiority without tyranny, parity without disorder, and subjection without slavery.”

**4. His Theory of Episcopacy Moderate.**—Hooker’s own theory of episcopacy was very moderate. He admits that “there may be sometimes very just and sufficient reasons to allow ordination to be made without a bishop,” that there is no need for “an everlasting continuance of bishops,” and that they are not required to give validity to the Sacraments. He affirms that “the whole church visible is the true

<sup>1</sup> *Constitutional History*, chap. iv. note.

original subject of all power"—a position which, justly considered, and given full scope, completely subverts both sacerdotalism and the autocratic government which prelacy involves. Undoubtedly, however, Hooker lifted the controversy to a high level, and brought out certain principles which were being overlooked on both sides. As Skeats justly says : "In an age when nearly all learning and culture were on the side of the Puritans and Independents, when most of the ministers of the Established Church 'were the basest of the people,' and had been taken from the lowest occupations, Hooker must have seemed an ecclesiastical Alps, and time has not diminished his greatness."<sup>1</sup>

**5. The Name of Lord Bacon set against that of Hooker.**—But over against that of Hooker we have to set another name which belongs both to literature and to science, which represents an intellect larger and richer and more comprehensive than Hooker's—that of his great contemporary Lord Bacon, who was not a Puritan, and yet who pleaded for the very same reforms for which the Puritans sought. "It is good," he said, "we return unto the ancient bands of unity in the Church of God, which was, one faith, one baptism, and not one hierarchy, one discipline ; and that we observe the league of Christians as it is penned by our Saviour Christ ; which is in substance of doctrine this : All that is not with us is against us ; but in things indifferent, and but of circumstance this :

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Free Churches of England*, p. 22.

he that is not against us is with us . . . as it is excellently alluded by that father that noted that Christ's garment was without seam, and yet the Church's garment was of divers colours, and thereupon set down for a rule, Let there be variety in the vesture, but not a rent." But Bacon went still further with the Puritans. In a note to chapter vi. of his *Constitutional History*, Hallam refers to a tract of Bacon, entitled *An Advertisement Touching the Controversies of the Church of England*, in which, Hallam says, "He excepts to several matters of ceremony, the cap and surplice, the ring in marriage, the form of absolution, and such like; and he inveighs against the abuse of excommunication, against non-residence and pluralities, the oath *ex officio*, the sole exercise of ordination and jurisdiction by the bishop . . . and in his predominant spirit of improvement he asks, 'Why the civil State should be purged and restored by good and wholesome laws made every three or four years in Parliament assembled, which deviseth remedies as fast as time breedeth mischiefs; and, contrariwise, the ecclesiastical State should still continue upon the dregs of time, and receive no alteration now for these forty-five years or more?'"<sup>1</sup> The reforms here suggested by Bacon were just the reforms demanded by the Puritans.

**6. Spenser: "The Shephearde's Calendar."** — It was, however, in the great poet Spenser, whose "Faery Queen," we have been told, settled the question

<sup>1</sup> See Spedding's *Bacon*, iii. p. 105.

whether there was to be such a thing as English poetry or no, and who has been called “the poet’s poet,” that the Puritan spirit found sympathetic expression in the higher form of poetry. In his “Shephearde’s Calendar, Containing Twelve Æglogues Proportionable to the Twelve Moneths,” published anonymously in 1579, there is a clear reflection of the ecclesiastical occurrences of the day. The ‘Algrind’ of the “Shepherd’s Calendar” is Archbishop Grindal; ‘Morell’ in Spenser’s poem is Aylmer, Bishop of London, also spelt ‘Elmor’ and ‘Ellmor.’ Originally an ardent Puritan, Aylmer became notorious for his cruel treatment of the Puritans, as well as for his pride and the importance and dignity which he assumed. Having cut down an avenue of elm trees at Fulham for the purpose of raising money, he was nicknamed “the Elmer” and “Marelm.” Referring to him, Spenser asks—

“ Is not thilke same a goteheard prowde  
That sittes on yonder bancke ? ”

The seventh eclogue is a dialogue between Morell (Aylmer) and Thomalin, who represent the two parties in the Church, the Anglicans and the Puritans, and in a way that brings out the sympathy of the poet with the latter. Of the bishops of the primitive Church Thomalin says—

“ Whilome all these were lowe and lief [dear],  
And loved their flocks to feed :  
They never stroven to be chiefe,  
And simple was their weede ” [dress],

But as to the bishops now—

“ They bene yclad in purple and pall,  
So hath their God them blest ;  
They reigne and rulen over all  
And lord it as they list.”

Then we have the incident of Archbishop Grindal’s suspension by the Queen because he refused to suppress the “ Exercises ” related thus—

“ But saye me, what is Algrind, he  
That is so oft bynempt ? ” [named]

To which Thomalin answers—

“ He is a shephearde great in gree  
That hath been long ypent [pent up, imprisoned].  
One daye he sat upon a hyll  
(As now thou wouldest me)  
But I am taught by Algrind’s ill  
To love the low degree ;  
For sitting so with bared scalpe  
An eagle soared bye  
That weening his whyte head was chalke  
A shellfish down let flye :  
She weened the shellfish to have broke,  
But therewith bruized his brayne ;  
So now astonied with the stroke,  
He lyes in lingering payne.”

The “ eagle soaring bye ” was of course the Queen ; and the Archbishop’s fate is bemoaned as that of the “ good Algrind whose hap was ill.”

**7. The “ Faery Queen.”**—But it is in the “ Faery Queen,” which appeared considerably later—the first

three books in 1590, and the second three in 1596—that the Puritan ideal finds its richest and most poetic rendering. In early life Spenser espoused the cause of a further and more thorough Church reform, and the “Faery Queen” enables us to see that to that cause he was faithful to the end. In his *Illustrations of English Religion*, Henry Morley says that just as “the highest expression of the opposite view is in the *Ecclesiastical Polity* of Richard Hooker,” so “the highest expression of the Puritan view of English religion in the latter half of the reign of Elizabeth is to be found in the First Book of the ‘Faery Queene.’” “Both in its conception” (says Green in his *Short History*) “and in the way in which this conception is realised in the portion of his work which Spenser completed, his poem strikes the note of the coming Puritanism. In his earlier pastoral, the ‘Shepheard’s Calendar,’ the poet had boldly taken his part with the more advanced reformers against the Church policy of the Court. He had chosen Archbishop Grindal, who was then in disgrace for his Puritan sympathies, as his model of a Christian pastor, and attacked with sharp invective the pomp of the higher clergy. His ‘Faery Queen’ in its religious theory is Puritan to the core. . . . It is yet more in the temper and aim of his work that we catch the nobler and deeper tones of English Puritanism.”

**8. Significance of the Imagery.**—A brief reference to the terms and allegorical figures of the poem, and their significance, will suffice to show the main drift of

it. ‘Faery,’ of course, means *spiritual*. The ‘Faery Queen’ or ‘Gloriana’ is the Glory of God, which is the object of every faery Knight, or in other words every militant virtue, and this is attainable only through Prince Arthur, who represents Christ Himself. The Red Cross Knight, St. George, who has to contend with the Dragon, is none other than spiritual Christianity; the ‘wanton palfrey’ on which he is seated is Anglicanism or ceremonialism; and thus mounted he is separated from the lady ‘Una’ (Truth), and takes up with the false and scarlet clad Duessa of Rome, who conducts the unhappy Red Cross Knight into the dungeon of ‘Orgoglio,’ the pride and pomp of Anglicanism with its unreformed Roman ceremonial; and in the dungeon of ‘Orgoglio’ the Red Cross Knight remains in thrall. Such is Spenser’s picture of Anglicanism—in bondage to ‘Orgoglio’ through attachment to the Duessa of Rome! It is when we read the poem in the light of such a rendering that we realise what marvellous and significant representations it contains of the conflict that goes on in the soul of the individual and on the field of English history.

**9. Shakespeare.**—But it is a question of deep interest—What relation was sustained to Puritanism by a greater poet than Spenser, and a more imperial intellect than that of Bacon, even Shakespeare himself?

**10. Brought up in a Puritan Atmosphere.**—No critic has been able to infer with confidence from his

writings to which side the great poet's convictions inclined. It has been cited as a singular example of the way in which "the most supremely gifted imaginative artist, moving in the elemental region of human passion, and breathing the serener air of poetic inspiration, may hold his art aloof from the storms which agitate his age." From this apparent indifference to Church reforms some Roman Catholic and other writers have argued that his secret sympathies were with the old faith. The argument is a precarious one. The Rev. T. Carter in his very careful and interesting book, *Shakespeare Puritan and Recusant*, has given what seems clear and convincing evidence that Shakespeare was brought up in a Puritan home, educated by Puritan masters, accustomed to listen to Puritan preachers ; that his favourite daughter was married to an ardent Puritan ; and that in his later years, after his return to Stratford, he was in habitual intercourse with eminent Puritans. I can only briefly indicate the facts by which Mr. Carter, on what seems good evidence, is led to his conclusions.

**11. Warwickshire the most Puritan County in England.**—Remember that Shakespeare's county of Warwickshire was one of the most Puritan in England. Nowhere was the Puritan party more influential than here. As Mr. Carter reminds us, the Earl of Leicester, the Earl of Warwick, Job Throgmorton of Haseley, Robert Wigston of Woolston and John Hales of Coventry were prominent among the laymen. Thomas Lever was Archdeacon of Coventry, where Humphrey

Fenn also disseminated Puritan principles for forty years; Edward Lord and Hugh Clark were vicars of Woolston, John Hooke and Ephraim Hewet vicars of Wroxhall, Samuel Clark of Alcester, and Richard Byfield of Stratford—all noted Puritans. Above all, the great Puritan leader, Thomas Cartwright, was Warden of the Hospital in Warwick, which was only a few miles distant from Stratford. There he preached to large congregations drawn from the surrounding districts. “There was not a nobleman or gentleman of quality in all the country that looked heavenward, or was of any account for religious learning,” we are told, “but sought the company of Cartwright.”

**12. His Father, John Shakespeare, a Puritan.**—Now in 1564, the year in which William Shakespeare was born, we find his father, John Shakespeare, and John Tayler, as representatives of the Town Council of Stratford, engaged in defacing images, crosses, a crucifix, and an altar in an old church, which was under the supervision of the Council. In 1571 John Shakespeare is chief alderman of Stratford, John Wheler, alderman, Adrian Quyney, bailiff, and Nicholas Barneshurst and Thomas Barber chamberlains of the borough. These men are always found associated when strong Puritanical measures are being executed. Thus John Shakespeare and John Wheler are the active agents employed when the cross is torn down, the rood-loft destroyed, and the images and pictures defaced. So now in 1571, the borough records testify that the above-named bailie, aldermen, and capital

burgesses agreed to sell the copes and vestments, which are mentioned in detail. In 1572, when great efforts are being made, especially in the Parliament, in favour of reform, John Shakespeare, Adrian Quyney, and Thomas Barber are sent up to London to further it.

**13. His Schoolmaster a Puritan.**—The Grammar School of Stratford, which William Shakespeare as a boy attended, was under the charge of Thomas Hunt, a strong Puritan, who was afterwards, as curate of Luddington, deprived for his Puritanism. Thus both at home and at school Shakespeare had a Puritan upbringing. When the Borough Council of Stratford in 1592, incited by the authorities, began to persecute the Puritans, the same aldermen, John Shakespeare and John Wheler, are among the persons severely fined, and marked down among the Puritan ‘recusants’—persons who were failing to attend their parish church. It was at this time that Cartwright was drawing so many from far and near to his ministry at Warwick.

**14. His Minister and Associates in Stratford Puritans.**—When Shakespeare returned to Stratford, and settled in New Place there, “his father’s friends,” Mr. Carter shows, became his associates and kinsmen. With his house in New Place a pew was appropriated to him in the chapel, and the famous Puritan, Dr. Richard Byfield, was his minister, and his no less famous sons, Nicholas Byfield, well known later as a Puritan commentator, and Adoniram Byfield, who became one of the secretaries of the Westminster

Assembly of Divines, then young men of Stratford, were among his acquaintances and friends. Shakespeare's favourite daughter, Susannah, was married to Mr. John Hall, M.A., a medical man, who was a vigorous Puritan, and a warm friend and supporter of the Puritans. The great dramatist was thus at New Place moving in a Puritan atmosphere, and those nearest to him were noted for their devotion to Puritanism.

**15. His Bible the Geneva Version.**—One of the notable things in Shakespeare's plays is his fondness for Biblical quotation, his familiarity with the Bible, and the accuracy with which he quotes it. Bible thoughts and words are wrought into the warp and woof of his plays in a way that would have been impossible had not his mind from early years been steeped in Biblical ideas, language, and imagery. Mr. Halliwell Phillips gives good ground for believing that the version used by him was the Geneva version, which, at the time referred to, was very much confined to Puritan households. Many of the words and passages quoted by Shakespeare, he points out, are found in the Geneva version.

I have only touched in the briefest way on the main facts adduced by Mr. Carter on evidence in the face of which it seems impossible to doubt that Shakespeare was reared in a Puritan home, and in the closing years of his life moved in a Puritan atmosphere. The presumption which thus arises (to use the words of Principal Dykes in his prefatory note to

Mr. Carter's book) "that the aims of the advanced Protestants, as they commanded the sympathy of Shakespeare's earlier contemporary, Edmund Spenser, and claimed the powerful pen of his younger contemporary, John Milton, so they retained a hold on the mature intelligence of a greater than either, is one which there is little or nothing in his writings to outweigh."

**16. John Milton.**—John Milton belongs to a later period of the Puritan struggle than that which has been claiming our attention. But as the subject of the present chapter is Puritanism in the higher literature, it will be convenient, and need not seriously dislocate our narrative, to notice here the relation to the Puritan movement of that great poetic genius who, although less myriad-minded, may be said to stand next to Shakespeare in the galaxy of literary luminaries.

**17. His Part in the Controversy on Church Government.**—The controversy on Church government which began to rage in the time of Elizabeth broke out again in 1640. Its origin was due mainly to the movement which had overthrown Laudian episcopacy in Scotland, and which, uniting with a similar movement south of the Tweed, threatened to overthrow it in England also. Dr. Joseph Hall, Bishop of Exeter, set on by Laud, published in 1640 a treatise entitled *Episcopacy by Divine Right Asserted*. It was the signal for a war of books and pamphlets which continued for twenty years. It has

been calculated that between 1640 and 1660 not less than 30,000 treatises appeared on this subject, so that during the years named the tracts and treatises must have been flying like snowflakes in a storm, or like insects in the summer air. Prominent among those who took part in the great debate were the doughty Scotsmen Alexander Henderson, Robert Baillie, George Gillespie, and Robert Blair. But the chief reply to Hall—and one that gave a name to the whole controversy—purported to be written by S.M.E.C.T.Y.M.N.U.U.S.—a signature made up of the initial letters of the names of its authors: S. M. (Stephen Marshall) E. C. (Edmund Calamy) T. Y. (Thomas Young) M. N. (Matthew Newcomen) and U. U. S. (William Spurstow). The person who had the chief share in it was, according to Baillie, Thomas Young, a Scotsman, who had been Milton's tutor; and Professor Masson has given reasons for believing that Milton himself had a considerable hand in it. It was in 1641 that Archbishop Ussher (then residing in London) issued his *Reduction of Episcopacy*, in which he proposed a compromise between Episcopacy and Presbytery. But against Episcopacy in every form Milton now launched a series of tremendous thunderbolts. The first was entitled *Of Reformation Touching Church Discipline in England*; his second was a pungent criticism of Ussher's proposal; his third a terrific attack on Bishop Hall in support of the 'Smectymnuans.' Before administering the *coup de grace* to the right reverend prelate, Milton had

published under his own name a powerful defence and exposition of the Presbyterian polity under the title, "*The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty*: By Mr. John Milton, in Two Books." The Presbyterian form of government advocated by Milton is one based on popular suffrage, free from State-patronage and control, dependent on moral and religious motives solely, and not on civil or political penalties or privileges for its sanction and dynamic. Milton's view in this respect was unhappily in advance of his times. The attempt of the Westminster Assembly to employ coercive measures to enforce their system turned Milton bitterly against them. I may add that the controversy did not end till Prelacy was abolished, the Westminster Assembly summoned, and Presbyterianism actually set up in England. But more of this later.

**18. Milton was of the True Puritan Temper.**—He had in a pre-eminent degree the loftiness and elevation of thought which were characteristic of the genuine Puritan. Though fallen on "evil days and evil tongues," although

"In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,  
And solitude,"

as Wordsworth said of him—

"His soul was like a star and dwelt apart";  
or rather, as he said of himself, he lived

"As ever in his great taskmaster's eye."

Hence it was he was able to rise far “above the Olympian hill,” high “above the flight of Pegasean wing.” He had thus the Puritan contempt for mere external circumstances, and the Puritan tranquillity of mind, fortitude, and inflexibility of purpose in the face of difficulty or peril. He loved liberty and hated tyranny more intensely than the noblest of them, and he was certainly not averse to the refinements of life, or the beauties of literature and art.

**19. His Poetry Steeped in the Puritan Spirit.—** When we turn from Milton himself, and from Milton’s prose to his poetry, we find it steeped in the Puritan spirit. His scathing picture of the Anglican clergy in “*Lycidas*” at once comes to mind—

“ How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,  
 E’now of such as for their bellies’ sake  
 Creep and intrude and climb into the fold !  
 Of other care they little reckoning make,  
 Than how to scramble at the shearer’s feast,  
 And shove away the worthy bidden guest. . . .  
 And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs  
 Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw ;  
 The hungry sheep look up and are not fed,  
 But swell’n with wind, and the rank mist they draw,  
 Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread,”—

while the ‘grim wolf’ of Rome ‘with privy paw,’ aided by Anglicanism, “daily devours apace, and nothing said.” But the end is near. The two-handed engine—the executioner’s axe—“at the door

stands ready to smite once, and smite no more." "In these lines," says Warton, "our author anticipates the execution of Archbishop Laud."

*Paradise Lost* has been described as "the epic of Puritanism." The conception of the divine decrees, it has been pointed out, lies at the basis of it. The problem with which it deals, the eternal warfare between good and evil, the problem of sin and redemption, is that which was ever pressing upon the spirit of the Puritan. "The greatness of the Puritan aim in the long and wavering struggle for law and justice and a higher good; the colossal forms of good and evil which moved over its stage; the debates, conspiracies, and battles which had been men's life for twenty years; the mighty eloquence and mightier ambition which the war had roused into being—all left their mark on the *Paradise Lost*. Whatever was highest and best in the Puritan temper spoke in the nobleness and elevation of the poem, in its purity of tone, in its grandeur of conception, in its ordered realisation of a great purpose" (Green). "Apart from the Puritan influence" (says Professor Dowden), "such works as *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, and the *Pilgrim's Progress* are inexplicable." With the testimony of the highest literature through the voices of Bacon, Spenser, Milton, raised on its behalf, with Shakespeare himself as the product of a Puritan home, with the *Pilgrim's Progress* as the outpouring of its very lifeblood, Puritanism has no reason to be ashamed of its literary record. "In the latter half of

the seventeenth century there were only two minds which possessed the imaginative faculty in a very eminent degree. One of those minds produced the *Paradise Lost*, the other the *Pilgrim's Progress*" (Macaulay).



BOOK III  
**PURITANISM UNDER THE STUARTS**



## CHAPTER I

### PURITANISM UNDER JAMES I.—“A TALL STRIPLING”

**I. The Closing Years of Elizabeth.**—As the reign of Elizabeth drew to a close there was a lull in the storm that beat upon the Puritans. Even while, as an external organisation, the system was being ruthlessly crushed, its essential spirit was progressing. It was still strong in the Universities. As the older clergy died out in the parishes, their places were taken by men less attached by tradition and custom to the mediæval rites. The use of the Prayer-Book was enforced, but the Church services had been brought nearer to the Puritan ideal. The Communion table was generally found in the middle of the church, the surplice was laid aside, and the ceremonial, as far as might be, simplified. The repressive measures against the Puritans were relaxed, the chief cause being the uncertainty respecting the policy that would be pursued by Elizabeth’s successor, who had already interposed by letter in behalf of oppressed Puritans. The fears and forebodings of the bishops made them cautious, and the hopes of the Puritans that

James's accession would bring them relief kept them quiet.

**2. James's Policy in Scotland.**—It was in 1578, at the age of twelve, that James, son of Mary Stuart and Lord Darnley, and a lineal descendant of Henry VII., nominally at least assumed the reins of government in Scotland. He had had the benefit of the tuition of the celebrated George Buchanan, whose testy temper did not endear him to his pupil, and who, when reminded that he had only made James a pedant, replied that it was the best that could be made of the timber. James was characteristically vacillating in his policy towards the Scottish Church. In 1581 he took the National Covenant by which he abjured Popery, and pledged himself to adhere to and defend the doctrine and discipline of the Reformed Church of Scotland. But he came under the sinister influence of worthless favourites, who inspired in him at once a dislike to Presbyterianism and an attachment to arbitrary principles of government. In 1584, the "Black Acts" were passed, which declared the King supreme in all causes, and all assemblies illegal except those licensed by the King, and placed the chief ecclesiastical authority in the hands of the bishops,—Acts which ministers were required to sign. In 1590 we find the King so far veered round that at a meeting of the General Assembly he pronounces the Scottish Church to be "the purest kirk in the world," and praises God that he was born to be King in such a kirk. "The kirk of Geneva," he said,

'keepeth Pasch and Yule. What have they for them ? They have no institution. As for our neighbour kirk of England it is an ill-mumbled mass in English : they want nothing of the mass but the liftings. I charge you, my good people, ministers, doctors, elders, nobles, gentlemen and barons, to stand to your purity, and to exhort the people to do the same ; and I, for sooth, so long as I brook my life and crown, shall maintain the same against all deadly.' In 1592, the Black Acts were repealed, the episcopal polity abolished, and the national Church established on a Presbyterian basis.

But the volatile prince soon changed his mood. At a private interview the King "in a maist crabbit and coleric manner" charged Andrew Melville and his Presbyterian friends with convening church meetings, whereupon Melville reminded the King that "there were two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland, King James the head of this Commonwealth, and Christ Jesus, the King and Head of the Church, whose subject James the Sixth is, and of whose kingdom he is not a king, nor a lord, nor a head, but a member. Permit us then freely to meet in the name of Christ, and to attend to the interests of that kingdom," which we are authorised by Christ Himself to govern. But the King was now determined on setting up episcopacy in Scotland. The General Assembly, at his instance, was induced to appoint certain ministers to act as their Commissioners, and who took their seats in Parliament with the

nominal rank of bishops—"the needle" (says James Melville) "which drew in the episcopal thread." The venerable David Ferguson compared the stratagem to that of the Greeks capturing Troy by means of the wooden horse. "Equo ne credite, Teucri," he said to his brethren. It was a good while, however, before James succeeded in his object.

**3. James becomes King of England.**—We have now arrived at the date (March 1603) when James on the death of Elizabeth became King of England. Very far he was from the English ideal of kinghood. "His big head, his slobbering tongue, his quilted clothes, his ricketty legs stood out in as grotesque a contrast with all that men recalled of Henry or Elizabeth, as his gabble and rhodomontade, his want of personal dignity, his buffoonery, his coarseness of speech, his pedantry, his contemptible cowardice." He was shrewd and ready witted, had read widely, and had written on subjects which "ranged from predestination to tobacco." But he was a pedant of the first water, and was aptly designated by Henry IV. "the wisest fool in Christendom"; with, as Mr. S. R. Gardiner puts it, "a great aversion to taking trouble of any kind. He believed himself to be authorised to rule England, partly by his birth, partly by some divine right connected with his birth, but infinitely more by his own superiority in wisdom."

**4. The 'Millenary Petition.'**—On the Queen's death, the Dean of Canterbury was immediately despatched to Scotland in the name of the English bishops and

clergy to assure his Majesty of their loyalty and duty. The King was already on his way to London when the Puritans approached him with what is known as the ‘Millenary Petition,’ so called because it stated that the petitioners “to the number of more than 1000 ministers groaned under the burden of human rites and ceremonies.” They asked that the cross in baptism, baptism by women, confirmation, the cap and surplice, the ring in marriage, bowing at the name of Jesus, and such like ceremonies be done away with, or left optional; that the Lord’s Day be not profaned, and none but the canonical Scriptures read in church; that none but capable men be admitted to the ministry, that they should be required to preach on the Lord’s Day, that non-residence be forbidden, that ministers should not be obliged to subscribe except according to law, that they should not be excommunicated for twelve penny matters, and that the *ex officio* oath be sparingly used.

**5. The Hampton Court Conference.**—On January 14, 1604—nearly ten months after his accession—the King called together a Conference between the two parties to be held before himself and his Council at Hampton Court. Had James been a wise ruler instead of a conceited pedant and blundering busybody, he might easily, by securing some concessions on both sides, have united his people, healed the divisions, and staunched the open sores that have been draining their life. But his object was to air

and exhibit his own conceits, and to browbeat and bully those who were not able to recognise in them the wisdom of Solomon. He chose nine bishops, eight deans, and two other dignitaries on the Prelatist side, and four ministers from among the Puritans—Rainoldes, Sparkes, Chadderton, and Knewstubs—to take part in the Conference; but all through he was consulting privately with the former how best to defeat their opponents. For an account of what took place we have to depend on one of the Prelatist party, Dr. Barlow, who, as Fuller says, “set a sharp edge on his own, and a blunt edge on his adversaries, weapons.”

On the first day the Puritans were not admitted at all. When they were admitted they asked that the doctrine of the Church should be kept pure, that good pastors who would preach the gospel should be placed in all the churches, that the Book of Common Prayer should be fitted to more increase of piety, and that Church government should be administered according to Scripture. While Rainoldes was speaking, Bancroft fell upon his knees, and begged the King to stop him, as it was contrary to an ancient Canon to hear schismatics against their bishops. The King made a long harangue, ending with his now favourite maxim, ‘No bishop, no king.’ It was in the course of these discussions that Rainoldes suggested a revised translation of the Bible, a suggestion which bore fruit in the preparation of the Authorised Version with which we are

familiar. But when he took exception to the reading of the Apocrypha in church, the sign of the cross in baptism, the use of the surplice, and such matters, the King ordered him to say no more on these points, that it was for the King, and not for any subject, to decide in regard to them, that he would have one doctrine in the kingdom, one discipline, and one religion in substance and ceremony. When the Puritans asked that the ‘prophesyings’ and diocesan synods should be revived, the King broke out into a violent storm. He saw, he said, that they were aiming at “a Scottish Presbytery, which agreed as well with a monarchy as God and the devil.” He threatened finally that “he would make them conform, or harry them out of the land.” “I peppered them soundly,” was his own account of the so-called Conference. “The Puritan ministers were insulted, ridiculed, and laughed to scorn without either wit or good manners,” says Canon Perry. The calm verdict of Hallam is: “We are alternately struck with wonder at the indecent and partial behaviour of the King and at the abject baseness of the bishops.” The Archbishop of Canterbury avowed that his Majesty “spake by the special assistance of God’s Spirit”; and the Bishop of London on his knees beslavered him with the most fulsome flatteries. “The years of the primate claim for him,” says Marsden, “the forbearance which is due to decaying faculties, and perhaps a second childishness. The servility of the Bishop of London wants this, the

only possible excuse. James was probably the most credulous man then alive, but he could hardly believe in the nauseous flatteries with which this memorable Conference closed."

It may be argued that the Puritans thus required to conform had little to complain of in not being permitted to deviate from the Book of Common Prayer. But, observe, they were not at liberty to have the form of worship which their consciences approved. They must either conform to the rites and ceremonies which their consciences condemned, or be "harried out of the land." "An argument," says Mr. S. R. Gardiner, "which would deserve considerable weight where any dissatisfied members of a congregation are at liberty to withdraw from it, and to establish their own worship apart, is much less valid when it is applied to a state of things in which but one form of worship is allowed for a whole nation."<sup>1</sup>

**6. Ecclesiastical Canons.** — Whitgift died in February 1604, and Bancroft was promoted to the primacy. Just prior to that promotion he had presided at the Convocation of 1604, which had passed a series of Canons, declaring, among other things, that whoever should affirm that the Church of England was not a true apostolic church, or that its forms of worship and rites and ceremonies are unlawful or superstitious, or that its government by archbishops, bishops, deans, etc., or its mode of

<sup>1</sup> Gardiner's *Puritan Revolution*, p. 14.

consecrating bishops, priests, etc., is repugnant to Scripture, or whoever should separate from its Communion, was excommunicated *ipso facto*, and not restored till he publicly repented and revoked his error. These “barbarous Canons” are still on the Church’s statute-book, and binding on the clergy. No doubt they are now “harmless as the instruments of torture of the same age preserved as relics in the tower” (Marsden), but they were not innocuous under James. Many of the clergy, unable to conform, were silenced, thrown into prison, or driven into exile; S. R. Gardiner says three hundred, other authorities say upwards of a thousand clergymen were expelled from their livings.

**7. Andrew Melville and the Archbishop.**—Andrew Melville and some other Scottish ministers were brought to London on the plea of being required to consult with the King for the settlement of Church affairs in Scotland. They were badgered by the King, and lectured by bishops in the King’s Chapel on the value of episcopacy, and the duty of submission to the royal will. The Bishop of Chichester, Dr. Andrews, proved to his own satisfaction by reference to the silver trumpets and their use that it belonged to the King to convene and dismiss ecclesiastical assemblies. In the chapel there was an altar with two shut books, two unlighted candles, and two empty chalices; and while the farce of preaching at them was going on, Melville amused himself by writing

a Latin epigram, which has been Englished thus :—

| “Why stand there on the royal altar hie  
Two closed books, blind lights, two basins drie?  
Doth England hold God’s mind and worship close,  
Blind of her sight, and buried in her dross?  
Doth she, with chapel put in Romish dress,  
The purple whore religiously express?”

A copy of this epigram having been carried to the King by some Court spy, Andrew Melville was cited before his Majesty and his Council at Whitehall, when the memorable encounter took place between him and Bancroft, who sought to fasten on him a charge of treason for libelling the worship established by the King. “My lords,” exclaimed Melville, “Andrew Melville was never a traitor. But, my lords, there was one Richard Bancroft (let him be sought for) who during the life of the late Queen wrote a treatise against his Majesty’s title to the Crown of England, and here [pulling the *corpus delicti* from his pocket], here is the book, which was answered by my brother, John Davidson!” Seizing hold of the lawn sleeves of the primate, he called them ‘Romish rags,’ and Bancroft himself, as the author of *English Scotticising for Geneva Discipline*, “the capital enemy of all the Reformed Churches in Europe.” It was some time before Master Bancroft recovered from his confusion, and the Council from their astonishment. A little later Melville was found guilty of *scandalum magnum*, and thrown into the Tower, where he was kept

for four years, and then banished to France. He became Professor of Divinity at Sedan, and died there in 1622.

**8. Absolute Monarchy Inculcated.**—James had already published his book on “The True Law of Free Monarchies,” and his work entitled *Basilikon Doron*, addressed to his “dearest son Henry, the Prince.” In the former he taught that the King is a free and absolute monarch, who may do what he pleases with his people, who are not permitted to make any resistance but by flight, as in the case of the brute beasts. In the latter he affirms that the office of a King is partly civil and partly ecclesiastical, that a chief part of his function consists in ruling the Church, that it belonged to him to judge when preachers wander from their text, that parity among ministers is irreconcileable with monarchy, that episcopacy should be set up, and the Presbyterian ministers banished from the country. He held that the monarch is free from all control of law, responsible only to his own will, entitled even to control and direct the judges. “It is atheism and blasphemy,” he said, “to dispute what God can do; good Christians content themselves with His will revealed in His Word; so it is presumption and contempt to dispute what a king can do, or say that a king cannot do this or that.”

The chief reason of his dislike of the Puritans was their determined opposition to such an autocratic system of government, and the chief cause of his favouring the Prelatists was the zeal with which they

upheld his most extreme demands. The Divine Right of Kings, and the passive obedience of subjects were systematically taught by them. Dr. Cowell, Vicar-General of the Archbishop, in 1606 issued a work in which he affirmed that the King was not bound by the laws, or by his coronation oath ; that he is not obliged to call parliaments to make laws, but may make laws without them ; and Dr. Blackwood wrote in the same strain. The Canons, already referred to, declared the doctrine that all civil power, jurisdiction, and authority are derived from the people to be a pestilent error, that as sovereignty is a prerogative of birthright, passive obedience is a religious duty.

The Puritans, on the other hand, warmly advocated Constitutional principles of Government, and that the monarch is as much bound by law as the meanest of his subjects. It is a deplorable but undeniable fact that all through the tremendous struggle for Constitutional forms of government, and for civil and religious liberty, the Church of England was, as Lord Macaulay has pointed out, “the servile handmaid of monarchy, the steady enemy of public liberty.”

**9. The “Book of Sports.”**—Bancroft died in 1610 and was succeeded in the primacy by George Abbot, who was well disposed towards the Puritans. “He adhered only to the doctrine of Calvin, and did not think so ill of the discipline as he ought to have done,” says Clarendon. All through the King’s reign a conflict went on between the King and his Parliament, which was opposed alike to his arbitrary rule and his

anti-Puritan attitude. The fact that his Court was notorious for its immoralities did not tend to increase his popularity. The dislike was intensified by his foreign policy, which appeared in his desire to have his son Charles married to the Infanta of Spain, and in his action, or inaction rather, with regard to the war in the Palatinate, in which the Protestant interest and the interest of his own son-in-law were involved. Abbot was strongly opposed to his policy in both these matters.

It was in 1616 that the *Book of Sports* was issued under the King's direction, with a view to counteract the influence of a book by a Dr. Bound on the obligation to the observance of the Lord's Day, recently reprinted. The object of the *Book of Sports*, which was a broad-sheet rather than a book, was to legalise and encourage all sorts of games and revels on the Lord's Day—leaping, dancing, archery, May games, Whitsun-ales, morrice-dances and the like. It was ordered to be read from the pulpits in the parish churches, but the Archbishop forbade this. An accident, however, soon put an end to his interference in matters of State. Going out with a nobleman to shoot a deer in Hampshire, the Archbishop shot not a deer, but one of the keepers. The mishap weighed so heavily on his mind that he withdrew from public business, and his place was taken by Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, who was also friendly to the Puritans.

**10. Scotland Blessed with a Royal Visit.**—In 1617, to gratify, as he said himself, “a natural and salmon-

like desire to see the place of his breeding," the King paid a visit to his native land. The chapel of Holyrood was fitted up, like the royal chapel in London, with an altar, two unlighted candles, and images of the twelve apostles. Services after the Anglican manner, with bishops in their surplices, were begun; and the Privy Councillors and noblemen in Edinburgh were summoned to Holyrood to celebrate the Communion kneeling after the English form. The Scottish ministers met, however, and protested with such vigour against proposed legislative measures that the King was intimidated. Then came in 1618 the famous Assembly of Perth, which passed the notorious "five Articles" requiring the Communion to be received kneeling, that the two Sacraments might be administered in private, episcopal Confirmation, and the observance of Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost. Most of the ministers refused to read them from the pulpit, and antipathy to the Articles was almost universal among the people. An incident which illustrates the character of the King belongs to this period. John Welsh, minister of Ayr, whose wife was a daughter of John Knox, had been banished for taking part in an Assembly, and was living in exile in France. He lost his health, and was told by his physician that the only hope of his recovery depended on his return to his native air. His wife found access to the King, and asked him to allow her husband to return. The King asked who her father was. "John

Knox," she replied. "Knox and Welsh; the devil never made such a match as that," said the King. "Very likely, Sir," said she, "for we never spiered his advice." She pressed her request that his Majesty would give her husband his native air. "Give him the devil," rudely responded the King. "Give that to your hungry courtiers," she retorted. He told her that if she would persuade her husband to submit to the bishops he would allow him to return to Scotland. Lifting up her apron, she replied, "Please, your Majesty, I'd rather keep his head there." Her petition was refused, and Welsh died soon after.

**11. Doctrinal Puritans.**—Hitherto the controversy between the hierarchical party and the Puritans had turned on points of ritual and government: there was practically no dispute with regard to doctrine. The Whitgift Articles were even ultra-Calvinistic; and the English divines sent to the Synod of Dort (1618–1619) by James, and with the approval of Abbot, were strong supporters of the Calvinistic positions formulated by that Synod. But the leaven of Arminian doctrine had begun to spread widely among the clergy; and the King discovered that those who most warmly upheld his royal prerogative were precisely those who were also favourable to Arminian doctrine, and ceremonial forms, who therefore henceforward basked in the sunshine of the royal favour. The controversy which had raged in the Netherlands on the 'five points' was now transferred to England; and the King most characteristically

issued a paper of "Directions," enjoining silence, and to the effect that no person under the degree of a bishop or dean should preach on predestination or election or on the efficacy or resistibility of grace. By many of course the meddling and muddling of their royal busybody were disregarded. But from this time forward we begin to hear of "Doctrinal Puritans"—men who did not scruple at episcopal government, but who were equally earnest in denouncing Arminianism and Popery.

**12. The Pilgrim Fathers.**—No name in the history of Independency shines with greater lustre than that of John Robinson. He was a man of rare culture, much vigour, breadth, and elevation of mind, less dogmatic and more philosophical in intellectual temper than most men of his time and party. It was about 1607 that he and others, driven from England, made their way in detachments to Holland. They settled ultimately at Leyden, where the congregation of upwards of three hundred members formed by them became the mother of Congregationalism both in England and America. Robinson himself is justly regarded as the father of Independency, although the name 'Independent' in its ecclesiastical sense seems to occur first in a *Declaration and Plainer Opening of Certain Points* by Henry Jacob, published in 1612. Robinson held that "a company, though consisting but of two or three, separated from the world, whether unchristian or antichristian, and gathered into the name of Christ by a Covenant,

and made to walk in all the ways of God known to them is a church, and so hath the whole power of Christ.”<sup>1</sup>

It was from Robinson’s congregation in Leyden that the Pilgrim Fathers went forth to found a New England in America. The policy of James gave them no hope of being permitted to return to the old England which they loved, and to worship God there as their conscience dictated. Their thoughts therefore turned to the New World discovered by Columbus, on whose distant and desolate shores or among whose primeval forests they might find a haven more secure and hospitable than in the country that gave them birth. Not without much prayer and earnest consideration did they arrive at their decision. Their first step was to send agents to England who obtained a patent from the Crown, and induced some merchants to unite with them in the enterprise. It was chiefly the younger members of the congregation who now determined on emigrating. They sold their property, threw it into a common fund, purchased a small ship of sixty tons, and hired another of one hundred and eighty. Robinson himself remained at Leyden, awaiting the reports of the first adventurers. The words in which, after a day of fasting and prayer, their revered pastor bade them farewell are part of history.

“We are now quickly to part with one another,” he said, “and whether I may live to see your faces any

<sup>1</sup> *Works*, ii. 132.

more on earth, the God of heaven only knows ; but whether the Lord has appointed that or no, I charge you before God and His blessed angels that you follow me no further than you have seen me follow the Lord Jesus Christ. If God reveal anything to you by any other instrument of His, be as ready to receive it as ever you were to receive any truth by my ministry ; for I am verily persuaded that the Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of His Holy Word. For my part, I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the Reformed Churches, who are come to a period in religion, and will go at present no further than the instruments of their reformation. . . . I beseech you, remember it, it is an article of your Church Covenant, that you be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known to you from the written Word of God. Remember that and every other article of your sacred Covenant. But I must here withal exhort you to take heed what you receive as truth. Examine it, consider it, and compare it with other scriptures of truth before you receive it ; for it is not possible the Christian world should come so lately out of such thick anti-Christian darkness, and that perfection of knowledge should break forth at once.”

It was on the 5th of August, 1620, that at length, after various incidents, the two small vessels sailed from Southampton Bay. In a day or two they had to put back for repairs, when one of them, the *Speedwell*, gave up the enterprise. On the 8th

September the other, whose name, the *Mayflower*, is memorable for ever, with about a hundred souls on board, set out on their perilous voyage across the untried Atlantic, to lay the foundation of the New England States.

Other exiles had indeed gone before them. So early as 1562 companies of Huguenot refugees from France had established settlements in Florida and the Carolinas, and had got from Henry IV. a patent which gave them sovereignty from Philadelphia to Montreal. It was in 1608 that the first British colony was settled in Virginia. Not a few Puritans of the Presbyterian type were among the emigrants, one of them having been Alexander Whitaker, son of Dr. William Whitaker, Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, and cousin of Dr. William Gouge, a leading member of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. Whitaker organised a form of discipline and worship after the model framed by Cartwright and Travers, and is known as "the Apostle of Virginia."

After a voyage of sixty-three days the *Mayflower* at last touched land on the coast of Massachusetts. To the spot on which they landed they gave the name of Plymouth, in memory of the last port which they had seen in England. They arrived in December, when winter had already set in with exceptional severity. Disease and famine had stricken down half their number before their arrival. Only fifty men, women, and children survived to found the New England of the future. They at once

formed themselves into a church on Congregational principles, and established a civil government, in which one of their number was annually chosen president, with a council of seven. Every male inhabitant was at first a member of the legislature.

In 1625 other companies of refugees of a Presbyterian type followed, and in 1630 upwards of 1000 Puritans crossed the Atlantic with John Winthrop as their leader. It was they who founded Cambridge, Boston, Concord, and other townships. Cambridge with its college, now Harvard University, was named after the University town in England, which was the *alma mater* of so many of the Puritans, and Boston was so called after the original home of many of them in Lincolnshire, whence persecution had driven them. It is calculated that between the years 1620 and 1640 upwards of 22,000, some have said 50,000, Puritan emigrants had sailed from English and Dutch ports. They were, as Milton said, "faithful and free-born Englishmen and good Christians, constrained to forsake their dearest home, their friends and kindred, whom nothing but the wide ocean and the savage deserts of America could hide and shelter from the fury of the bishops,"<sup>1</sup> and even those could scarce shelter and protect them, for Laud sought to pursue and harry them even there. How true what George Herbert wrote—

"Religion stands a-tiltœ in our land,  
Ready to pass to the American strand."

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<sup>1</sup> *Of Reformation in England*, bk. ii.

But how great the contrast betwixt now and then! Where wealth and luxury abound to-day there were then little but intense cold and scarcity bordering on famine. "Where now the great Republic receives the shipping of the world into its commodious harbours, these few hundreds of outcast Puritans, the first founders of its strength, had to raise their psalms of thanksgiving on bleak and unknown headlands, amid cold and hunger andague, the graves of their little ones who had perished lying around them, Red Indians hovering near on one side, and on the other the eternal sea-line which severed them from dear, cruel England, and the long, low splash of the sullen waves."<sup>1</sup>

The "Plantation" of Ulster in the time of James meant the formation of another nursery of Puritanism, another extension of its influence, but the details of that movement belong to the story of the Irish Presbyterian Church, and cannot be related here.

**13. The Closing Years of James.**—When the reign of James was drawing to a close the decay both of religion and morals was deplorable. Earnestness in religion was treated with derision and ridicule. Mrs. Hutchinson speaks of the mockery and insult to which her father's family was exposed because they lived decent God-fearing lives. If they objected to the influence of the *Book of Sports* they were branded as seditious; if they set their face against debauchery and vice they were pilloried as Puritans,

<sup>1</sup> Masson's *Milton*, i. 321.

and if Puritans they were enemies to the King and his Government. The parents of Richard Baxter were respectable persons who conformed, he tells us, to the established religion, but because they sought to observe the common decencies of life, and to reverence the Lord's Day, they were reviled and scoffed at.

## CHAPTER II

### PURITANISM UNDER CHARLES I.: "IN THE FULL STRENGTH AND STATURE OF A MAN"

**1. Charles I.**—When in March 1625 James was succeeded by his son Charles, it would have required an exceptionally wise and broad-minded king and sage counsellors to rescue the kingdom from the evils and perils which beset it. None of these conditions was fulfilled in the rule of the new Sovereign. There was a certain reserve and dignity in his bearing which people could not help contrasting with the vulgar garrulity of his father, but he was vain and deceitful, and much more narrow-minded and obstinate than his father; he inherited to the full his father's views of the royal prerogative; and, like him, he found in High-Churchism a system at once congenial to his tastes, and in unison with his arbitrary principles of government. The fact that his Queen, Henrietta Maria, sister of the reigning French King, Louis XIII., was a devoted Romanist, a clever woman, and fond of intermeddling in State affairs, did not make his path easier.

**2. His Chief Advisers.**—He was still more unhappy in his two chief advisers.

(1) The first of these, Buckingham, was unprincipled, unscrupulous, and reckless. "Never any man in any age," says Clarendon, "nor I believe in any country, rose in so short a time to so much greatness of honour, power, or fortune, upon no other advantage or recommendation than of the beauty or gracefulness of his person." A vivid picture is given of him in Eliot's speech at his impeachment, which limits of space do not permit us to quote. Soon after his assassination in 1628 his place in the counsels of the King was taken by Wentworth.

(2) William Laud. But we are more concerned here with the other personage, who became the King's trusted counsellor in ecclesiastical affairs. At Oxford, says Wood, Laud "was esteemed by those who knew him a very forward, confident, and zealous person." Small of stature, with red face, sharp eyes, quick expression, and testy speech, by the wits of the University he was dubbed 'Parva Laus,' 'Little Laud.' "He bare no great stream," Fuller says, "taking more notice of the world than the world did of him." "His life in Oxford," says Archbishop Abbot, "was to pick quarrels with the lectures of the public readers, and to advertise them to the then Bishop of Durham that he might fill the ears of James with discontent against the honest men that took pains in their places, and settled the truth which he called Puritanism on their auditors." His disciple and biographer Heylin admits that it was thought dangerous to be much in his company. He had that

habit of “ferreting out the faults of those around him, and reporting them to those in authority, which is not thought a sign of a generous or wholesome nature.” “He could not debate anything,” says Clarendon, “without some commotion, even when the argument was not of moment.” It was a source of amusement to Sir Francis Cottingham in the Council, especially when the King was present, to lead Laud on till he would lose his temper and say something ridiculous. The truest picture of him is that afforded by his own Diary, where his childish superstition and smallness are constantly appearing. He had great faith in dreams and portents. The entrance of a robin red-breast through the window into his study he notes as an occurrence of deep significance. Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, is a prominent figure in his dreams. “Sunday, January 14, 1627, towards morning I dreamed that the Bishop of Lincoln came, I knew not whither, with iron chains, but returning loose from them leaped on horseback, and went away; neither could I overtake him!” The leading historians are practically unanimous in the view they give of him. Hallam says his talents “did not rise above mediocrity,” and that “there cannot be a more contemptible work than his Diary”; Macaulay describes his understanding as ‘narrow’; S. R. Gardiner says, “genius he had none, no power of sympathy with characters opposed to his own, no attractive force whatever”; and Green speaks of his “narrow mind” and “dogged will.” The sort of man Laud

was appears from this, that Bishop Williams, who introduced him to the Court, and secured his promotion, he requited with what Hallam calls “rancorous and ungrateful malignity, supplanted him by intrigue, incensed the King’s mind against his benefactor, and harassed him by his relentless persecutions.”

**3. The “Beauty of Holiness.”**—It is evident that from an early date he had a fixed purpose of bringing the Church of England as near as might be in doctrine and ceremonial to the Church of Rome without accepting the jurisdiction of the Pope. He was a strong believer in the “divine apostolical right of episcopacy,” first broached by Bancroft in the year 1589, in the figment of ‘apostolical succession,’ and that there can be no true Church without diocesan bishops. In doctrine he was strongly Arminian, while he and his sacerdotal brethren were the eager inciters of Charles in his most extreme attempts at absolutist government. It was in keeping with his small intellectual calibre that he was a great stickler for Uniformity in external details, and held that “Unity cannot long continue where Uniformity is shut out at the Church door.” He was especially bent on promoting what he called the “Beauty of Holiness,” which meant the increase of sensuous and ceremonious aids in worship, the observance of times and seasons, of saints’ days, and the use of fish in Lent. It meant that the priests as being specially holy should express that holiness in sacred vestments and gestures; that not only Christian edifices, but all

their furniture, vessels, knives and napkins should be consecrated too, and that such things were not to be seen or touched without obeisance. What he meant by the “Beauty of Holiness” will be best seen in his consecration of one of his churches in London, as described by Rushworth. “At the bishop’s approach to the west door,” Rushworth says, “some that were prepared for it cried with a loud voice ‘Open, open, ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may enter in !’ and presently the doors were opened, and the bishop with some doctors and many other principal men went in, and immediately falling down upon his knees, with his eyes lifted up and his arms spread abroad, uttered these words : ‘This place is holy ; the ground is holy ; in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I pronounce it holy.’ Then he took up some of the dust and threw it up into the air several times in his going up towards the chancel. When they approached near to the rail and Communion table, the bishop bowed towards it several times. . . . After this, the bishop being near the Communion table, and taking a written book in his hand, pronounced curses upon those that should profane that holy place, at the end of every curse bowing towards the east, and saying ‘Let all the people say, Amen.’ . . . As he approached the Communion table, he made several lowly bowings ; and coming up to the side of the table, where the bread and wine were covered, he bowed seven times, and then after the reading of many prayers, he came near the bread, and gently

lifted up a corner of the napkin wherein the bread was laid ; and when he beheld the bread, he laid it down again, flew back a step or two, bowed three several times towards it ; then he drew near again, and opened the napkin, and bowed as before. Then he laid his hand on the cup, which was full of wine, with a cover on it ; which he let go again, went back and bowed thrice towards it ; then he came near again, and, lifting up the cover of the cup, looked into it, and, seeing the wine, let fall the cover again, retired back, and bowed again." And so on. In such childish burlesques of Christianity did Laud conceive the "Beauty of Holiness" to consist.

**4. Laud's Ecclesiastical Policy.**—Laud had begun to push himself into notice in the time of James, but James was shrewd enough to see the sort of man he was. When Williams recommended him for the bishopric of St. David's, James replied : "The plain truth is that I keep Laud back from all place and authority because I find he hath a restless spirit, and cannot see when matters are well, but loves to toss and change, and to bring things to a pitch of reformation floating in his own brain." He told Williams that Laud had been privately pressing him to bring the Scots to "a nearer conjunction with the liturgy and Canons" of the English Church ; but, he added that Laud "kenned not the stomach of that people." Williams continued to plead for Laud. "Then take him to you," said the King, "but on my soul you will repent of it." Laud became chaplain to the Duke of

Buckingham, on whom henceforward his advancement at Court depended. "Continue him," Laud prays in his Diary, "a true-hearted friend to me, thy poor servant, whom thou hast honoured in his eyes!" Their relation to one another and to Charles, Masson very well describes when he says, "Buckingham was the all-powerful Grand Vizier, while Laud was the Confidential Mufti" of the Sovereign.<sup>1</sup> Thus from the time of Charles's accession Laud became his chief agent in ecclesiastical affairs. In the words of Hallam, he became "the evil genius of his unhappy Sovereign," and conspired with Charles and Wentworth "to subvert the fundamental laws and liberties of his country." He became Archbishop of Canterbury on the death of Abbot, in 1633, but long before that he was practically in power.

Nine days after the death of James, Laud showed Buckingham a list of the clergy, arranged into two classes, and marked respectively O. and P., which meant 'Orthodox' (*i.e.* sacerdotal) and 'Puritanical,' to enable the King to see who were to be promoted and who kept back. One of his first acts on his appointment as Archbishop was the reissue of the *Book of Sports* to encourage games and pastimes on the Lord's Day. Many of the clergy, instead of reading it to their people as they were commanded, read the Fourth Commandment, adding: "This is the law of God; the other is the injunction of man"; and

<sup>1</sup> The Grand Vizier is the Turkish prime minister; the Musti of Constantinople is the head of the Turkish religion.

many of them were suspended. In 1629 "Instructions" were sent forth requiring a more strict observance of rites and ceremonies. Various ceremonial changes were introduced, such as the removal of the Lord's Table, now called the 'altar,' to the east end of churches; a more uniform use of copes in cathedrals, and surplices in churches—a stricter realisation, in short, of the Laudian ideal. If ministers refused to conform, they were given over to the High Commission and the Star-Chamber. The result was that many were suspended and deprived, and for a long period many ships on the Thames were filled with emigrants to America. And these measures were taken at a time when, as S. R. Gardiner points out, three-fourths of the clergy were in sympathy with the Puritan ideal. As Carlyle puts it, "the King of England and his chief priests were going one way, the nation of England by eternal laws were going another."

**5. Continued Papal Aggression.**—Add to all this the dread of papal aggression so widespread and profound just now. The Roman Catholic powers were gaining success after success on the Continent. The Palatinate had already, before James's death, been lost to Protestantism. The Danish resistance had been broken at Lutter, and almost the whole of North Germany lay helpless at the feet of Wallenstein and Tilly. In France Rochelle had fallen before Richelieu. The great bulk of the English people were indignant at every movement that tended to impair the strength of Protestantism.

**6. The House of Commons.**—And the feelings of the people were truly represented by the House of Commons. Dr. Montague, an intimate friend of Laud, for teaching Arminian and Popish doctrines, and slighting the Reformed Churches and exalting the royal prerogative, was summoned to the bar of the House and committed to prison, but defended by Laud, and liberated by the King. Dr. Sibthorp in an Assize Sermon enjoined passive obedience to the commands of the Sovereign even where those commands are contrary to the law of God. Sibthorp was far outdone by Dr. Roger Mainwaring, who in sermons before the Court declared that “the royal will and command doth oblige the subject’s conscience upon pain of eternal damnation,” and that “the authority of Parliament is not necessary for the raising of aids and subsidies.” Mainwaring, for teaching doctrines subversive of the laws and liberties of the kingdom, was fined and imprisoned, Laud himself had a narrow escape, and the famous Petition of Right became the law of the land ; but Laud, Montague, and Mainwaring were promoted by the King. With special reference to the doings of Laud and Neile—“a frightfully ceremonial pair of bishops,” Carlyle calls them, “the fountain they of innumerable tendencies to Papistry and old clothes of Babylon”—“Resolutions” were carried through Parliament declaring any who countenanced Arminianism or Popery, or advised the levying or yielding of subsidies without grant of Parliament, as capital enemies of the kingdom.

Parliament was dismissed by the King, and leading members—such as Sir John Eliot, Strode, Holles, and Selden—imprisoned. Sir John, the greatest of Parliamentarians, was kept in the Tower till he died.

**7. Parliament Dispensed with: the Case of Leighton.**—For eleven years (1629–1640) the King, under the advice of such men as Laud, ruled without any Parliament. The Privy Council and the Star-Chamber superseded the ordinary courts of law, and a time of unmitigated tyranny set in. As an example of what now took place the case of the Rev. Alexander Leighton, father of the better known Archbishop Leighton, may be referred to. Dr. Leighton had been Professor of Divinity at St. Andrew's, and later held a lectureship in London, whence he was driven to Holland. While in Holland he wrote *Zion's Plea Against Prelacy*, which Masson, who had read the book, says is fairly written, in the mild and gentle spirit which characterised his son. Returning to London, he was arrested and brought to trial for the book which he had written two years before in another land. He was condemned, and degraded, but by connivance of his gaolers managed to escape from prison. He was again taken, and brought back to London, where he lay in a filthy hole infested with vermin for fifteen weeks, and reduced to such a condition that the hair and skin came off his body, and he was unable to appear in court. He was condemned unheard. By a hangman who was stimulated by strong drink he was whipped, receiving thirty-six

stripes with a treble-corded whip, after which he was kept standing for almost two hours in the pillory. Then he had one of his ears cut off; then one side of his nose was slit; then he was branded on the cheek by a red-hot iron with the letters S.S., ‘Stirrer of Sedition.’ He was then taken back to prison, and on that day seven-night, before the sores on his back, ear, nose, and face were healed, he was again put in the pillory at Cheapside, again whipped, the other ear cut off, the other side of his nose slit, and the other cheek branded; then he was taken back to prison, where he was kept for ten years, when the Long Parliament released him. When Laud, who was present, heard the sentence pronounced, it is said he “pulled off his cap and gave God thanks”; when the simple statement of the penalties inflicted on him was recited in Parliament, the clerk was repeatedly called upon to stop till the members recovered from their horror.

**8. The Case of William Prynne.**—Another person who got a taste of Laud’s tender mercies was William Prynne, a graduate of Oxford, a student of Lincoln’s Inn, a barrister, and a most voluminous writer of books. In 1632 he published his *Histrio-mastix*, or *Players’ Scourge*—an indictment of theatrical performances, which were just then very indecent. He was accused of having reflected on the Queen in one passage for having acted privately, and was prosecuted in the Star-Chamber by the Attorney-General at the instance of Laud. He was not allowed to employ

the usual means of defence, was fined in £5000, expelled from the University and Lincoln's Inn, degraded from the status of a barrister, and was condemned to the pillory in Westminster and Cheapside, to have his ears cut off, and to imprisonment at the King's pleasure. Three years later the same sentence was inflicted on him for ecclesiastical writings in which the hierarchy was said to be attacked ; and his ears, which had been sewed on after being cut off the first time, were again lopped off. Others suffered similarly. No wonder that their atrocious treatment roused public sympathy and excitement to the highest pitch.

**9. Jenny Geddes's Stool.**—It is impossible here to recount the details of the momentous struggle which soon began between the Long Parliament, which opened in November 1640, and the King. But to understand the ecclesiastical and even the political events which follow, it is necessary to turn for a little to Scotland. Archbishop Laud had accompanied King Charles on a royal visit to that country, and was greatly shocked to find within the King's realm, and so near to England, a people so utterly destitute of the "Beauty of Holiness" as the Scottish people were. He determined, therefore, on extirpating every vestige of Presbyterian worship, and enforcing Prelacy in its most offensive sacerdotal form on that stubborn kingdom. To this end a Liturgy or Service-book was framed, which was described as being "as near to the Roman Missal as English could be to Latin" ;

and to prepare the way for it a Book of Canons was sent forth, declaring it to be the only form of worship permissible, and requiring it to be used universally. But, as James had said of Laud long before, he “kenned not the stomach of that people,” down whose throats he proposed to thrust his Liturgy. A preliminary rehearsal of the new service was announced to be held in St. Giles’s Church on the 23rd July 1637. Arrayed in his white surplice, the Dean of Edinburgh passed to the reading-desk, and announced the ‘collect’ for the day, when the immortal Janet, who kept a stall in the High Street, hurled the stool on which she sat at him, crying “Fause loon, dost thou say mass at my lug?” A contemporary record says the dean ‘jouked’ when the stool was flung at him, and so escaped an unpleasant memento of the day.

Jenny’s stool was like a spark falling on a magazine of gunpowder, or like a stone thrown into the smooth waters of a lake, starting a series of waves which expand in ever-widening circles till they reach the shore. By a recent Anglican writer her feat has been characterised as “an act of insane bigotry,” and the revolutionary movement thereby set on foot as “a frenzy of fanaticism.” Writers of deeper insight and more comprehensive range of vision put a very different construction on it. To that ‘act of insane bigotry.’ Lord Macaulay traces our English freedom. “For practical importance in human affairs,” says Carlyle, “Helen of Troy is but a small heroine to

Jenny ; only she has been luckier in the recording. All Edinburgh, all Scotland, and behind that all England and Ireland rose in unappeasable commotion on the flight of that stool of Jenny's, and his grace of Canterbury, and King Charles himself, had lost their heads before there could be peace again." "Never," says Dean Stanley, "except in the days of the French Revolution, did a popular tumult lead to such important results."

**10. "For Christ's Crown and Covenant."**—To begin with, all Scotland was stirred to the depths, and a series of momentous events followed each other in quick succession : the renewal of the National Covenant in Greyfriars Church and Churchyard, and all over the country, many signing with their blood : the eventful General Assembly of 1638 in Glasgow, which, with the earnest determination of Scotland behind it, re-established Presbytery, and swept away all that stood in the way of it : the capitulation of Charles and his army at the Hill of Dunse Law to the Scottish army under Leslie, following a banner with the motto "For Christ's Crown and Covenant" : the possession of Newcastle by the same army somewhat later : the rising tide of sympathy in England with the Scots, and the growing desire to join hands with them both in civil and ecclesiastical affairs. The Puritan and Presbyterian movement in England, which had been driven below the surface by the High Commission and Star-Chamber persecutions, again revives, and rises in its might to unite with the revolt

in Scotland, and to demand through the Long Parliament, not only a recognition of civil rights and liberties, but a reformation of religion such as they have obtained beyond the border. A deep and general desire for a reform in Church government and worship, for a uniformity in these matters between England and Scotland, and for a synod of learned and pious divines to carry it through, found loud and eloquent utterance in Parliament.

**11. The Westminster Assembly of Divines.**—At length, in April 1642, the Parliament definitely determined on calling such an assembly together, and appointed two divines for each county in England, two for each of the Universities, and for the Channel Islands, one for each county in Wales, and four for London. In September 1642 a drastic Act was carried through both Houses of Parliament abolishing Prelacy; and finally, in May 1643, an Ordinance was passed convening the Assembly to meet at Westminster on the first day of July 1643. It was to consist of 151 members, including 121 divines, and 30 lay assessors, the latter embracing such scholars and statesmen as John Selden, John Pym, Oliver St. John, Sir Henry Vane, and a considerable number of peers. Its clerical members were almost all graduates of Oxford or Cambridge, many of them Fellows, several of them Masters of Colleges, and all except two (who were French Reformed divines) were in Episcopal orders in the Church of England. The desire of the Parliament was to have every variety of

opinion represented in the Assembly except that of the sacerdotalists. About a dozen of those nominated, including Archbishop Ussher and two English bishops, were in favour of some form of Episcopacy, but most of these declined to attend. Five members, who became known as the "Dissenting Brethren," were in favour of Congregational principles; and there was another group known as Erastians, who, mostly Presbyterian in their theory of the Church, held that all power of discipline belongs ultimately to the State. This very scholarly and able band of men included Dr. John Lightfoot, the renowned Orientalist, who became Master of Catharine Hall, Cambridge; Thomas Coleman, also a great Hebraist; and John Selden.

But the overwhelming majority were in favour of Presbyterian principles. The keen discussions such as those involved in the "Smectymnuan" Controversy, which had been going on for many years on the subject of Church polity, the course taken by the Prelatists, led by Laud, in favour of the oppressive and despotic absolutism of Charles, and sympathy with the struggle of the Scots for civil and religious liberty, had produced a strong and widespread feeling in favour of the Presbyterian order. Hundreds of clergymen, hitherto parish ministers in the Church of England, had come to adopt Presbyterian principles. "All the citizenship, all the respectability of London," says Professor Masson, "was resolutely Presbyterian, and of the 120 parish ministers of the city surrounding

the Assembly, only three, so far as could be ascertained, were not of strict Presbyterian principles."

It was not till the 14th September, when the Solemn League and Covenant was being signed, that the Scottish Commissioners—Alexander Henderson, Samuel Rutherford, George Gillespie, Robert Baillie, Sir Archibald Johnstone, Lord Maitland, the Earl of Cassilis—arrived, and later the Earl of Argyll.

The Assembly thus called together has left its mark, deep and permanent, not only on these islands, but on the American Continent, the British Colonies, and all the world over; and, as Masson suggests, to Britons to-day its history ought to be more interesting than the history of the other Councils, more ancient and oecumenical, of which we hear so much. It continued to sit for five years and six months.

**12. The Work done by the Assembly.**—Of the result of their labours our space does not permit us to speak—the Confession of Faith drawn up by them, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, their Directory of Public Worship, and the Form of Church Government framed by them. With regard to the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms, one remark ought to be made. It is a common impression that the system of doctrine embodied in those standards is one of the most extreme and rigid forms of Calvinism. This is a complete misapprehension. Dr. Alexander Mitchell has shown that their type of Calvinism is much milder than that in the Dutch or French symbols, or in Ussher's Articles. He and others, for example,

have shown that the Decrees or Purposes of God are only permissive so far as they have respect to those events which are brought about by the will of free agents, and, in particular, as regards sin.

It was on the subject of Church government that the keenest and severest struggle took place. And the conflict was embittered by the publication of what was called the "Apologetical Narration"—a treatise addressed to the Parliament by the five Independent members. The Presbyterians were indeed prepared to make considerable concessions. What they had in view was a *single national Church*, and to that end they were willing to provide for what they called an "accommodation" of tender consciences within it. In their "Vindication of Presbyterian Government and Ministry," they say: "We abhor an over-rigid urging of uniformity in circumstantial things." Their idea, however, was that if there was to be a *national Church* at all, the whole nation should be included in it; and at one time the two parties in the Assembly were on the point of such an accommodation and agreement. What the Independents insisted upon was *toleration* for them *outside* the establishment. At length, however, in July 1645, the Draft of Church Government, framed by the Assembly, was sent up to Parliament.

**13. The Presbyterian Order set up in England.**—One question remains for consideration. What practical effect, if any, was given to the labours of the Assembly? Was the system so laboriously

constructed by them put into actual operation? If it failed of permanent continuance, wherein lay the cause of the failure?

In answer, it has to be noted, first, that early in 1645 both Houses of Parliament had ratified the chief parts of the Presbyterian system, and that soon after that system was to some extent set up in England. It was at this stage that the breach occurred between the Assembly and the Parliament. When the Lords and Commons had passed their final ordinance establishing the Presbyterian system, they insisted on the right of appeal in each province from the Synod to the civil court, or to a tribunal of civil Commissioners. The question of spiritual independence was debated for months. At length, by the mediation of Argyll, a compromise was arranged; and the whole machinery of Presbyterian Church order came into operation in London and elsewhere in July and August 1646. In response to a petition of 12,578 persons it was established in Lancashire. It was put into effect also in the eastern counties, including Essex and Sussex, Suffolk and Norfolk; and in many other places. Finally, in January 1648 an ordinance was issued "for the speedy dividing and settling the several counties of the kingdom into distinct classical presbyteries and congregational elderships."

**14. The Causes of its Failure.**—Its triumph was a very brief one; indeed, before it had been put into full practical operation its prospects were

effectually blighted. What was the cause of this? The answer is fraught with weighty lessons for us still.

(1) One naturally thinks first of the success of Cromwell and his army, wherein the Independent interest, and the interest of the sectaries who formed such a large proportion of it, were predominant. As Green points out, "The change to a Presbyterian system of Church government" was at first not resented by the great bulk of Englishmen. "The dogma of the necessity of bishops was held by few, and the change was generally regarded with approval as one which brought the Church of England nearer to that of Scotland, and to the Reformed Churches of the Continent." "Had the change been made," says Green, at the moment when, with uplifted hands, the Commons swore the Covenant in St. Margaret's, "it would probably have been accepted by the country at large. But it met with a very different welcome when it came at the end of the war." Dissidence had by that time grown into a great power. There were not only the Independents and the Baptists, but numerous sects had sprung up, and were largely represented in the army. They very naturally feared suppression under a Presbyterian establishment.

(2) There were other obstacles. Although the form of Presbyterianism was set up, the Parliament refused to sanction the decisions of the Church courts in spiritual matters. It insisted on retaining in its

own hands an Erastian power as the supreme court of appeal, and would not permit any to be excluded from the Lord's Table even for spiritual offences without recourse to the civil courts.

(3) But it seems beyond doubt that the chief cause of the failure of Presbyterianism to obtain a permanent footing in the country at this juncture was the *coercive* aspect which it assumed, and which was in no way inherent in the system itself. Both Cromwell and Milton were in sympathy with the Presbyterian form of government, and they both took the Solemn League and Covenant. One of the best defences of Presbyterian polity ever written came from the pen of Milton. It was coercive Presbyterianism that he resented so bitterly, the refusal to tolerate in outside communions any who should not fall in with it. The army manifesto issued after the split had taken place between the Presbyterians and Independents, and signed by Fairfax, Cromwell, Ireton, and others, proves that this was the feeling in the army. Many of the most influential leaders in the army—the Lord Deputy Fleetwood, Oliver Cromwell's son-in-law, Major-General Harrison, Major-General Ludlow, and Colonel Hutchinson—were Baptists. It was not to be expected that an army composed of such men would stand by and permit Presbyterianism to be thrust upon them whether they would or no. We regard it as beyond measure deplorable that the Independents and the Presbyterians were not able at this momentous crisis in the history of both to come to a working

agreement. It was by its attempt to grasp too much that Presbyterianism lost all that was so nearly within its reach.

**15. Cromwell's Policy.**—Cromwell himself will always stand out in history as one of the greatest and most powerful generals and rulers the world has seen; a man who combined sound sense, practical wisdom, a rare largeness and massiveness of mind, and fervent piety with resistless energy of character; lightning-like swiftness in forming his plans, with equal promptitude in executing them. His practical sagacity is very apparent in the ecclesiastical policy pursued by him. He had not indeed learned the principles of toleration as they are now understood. Roman Catholics and infidels, or persons who undermined the foundations of the faith, were deprived of the franchise; but a Declaration was issued by the Council to the effect that "none be compelled to conform to the public religion by penalties or otherwise; but that endeavours be used to win them by sound doctrine, and the example of a good conversation." Instead of Presbyterian Church Courts, a Board of Commissioners called "Triers" was appointed, composed in part of laymen, to examine into the fitness of ministers presented to benefices; and on this Board there were Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists. On the whole it worked satisfactorily, and went far to solve the question of union among the Protestant denominations. Another tribunal was set up for the ejection of "scandalous, ignorant, and

insufficient ministers and schoolmasters," with a court for each county.

### 16. Growing Dissatisfaction with his Government.

—Cromwell was a dictator not from choice, but from necessity. He preferred constitutional methods when these were practicable. There is no evidence that he cared for power, except in so far as it seemed to him indispensable to the interests of the country. But the estrangement of the Presbyterians had already begun by the arrest put upon the progress of their scheme of a national Presbyterian Church. The expulsion of the 140 Members of Parliament by Colonel Pride and his troops in 1648—known as "Pride's Purge"—and the deposition thereby of the Presbyterians from power, leaving behind only those who would carry out the policy of the army, and the trial and execution of the King (January 1649), tended still more to shock and estrange the Presbyterians; and other events co-operated to deepen their estrangement. The Scottish Estates had offered the Scottish crown to the late King's son on condition of his taking the Covenant, and becoming a Presbyterian. Charles had no difficulty in complying, and just as little intention of fulfilling his pledges. The march of Cromwell and his army northwards, and their defeat of the Scottish army at Dunbar, gave the hope of a Presbyterian National Establishment in England its death-blow; and the trial and execution of the Presbyterian minister, Christopher Love, who had denounced the new Commonwealth "Engage-

ment," did not tend to conciliate Presbyterians. "This blow," says Baxter, "sank deeper to the root of the New Commonwealth than will easily be believed, and made it grow odious to all religious parties in the land except the sectaries."

Cromwell died on the 3rd of September, 1658. Just before his death there was a mighty storm that tore down trees, and stripped the roofs off houses. The tempest that disturbed the elements has been represented as a "fitting prelude to the passing of Cromwell's mighty spirit." He was succeeded by his son Richard, who had soon to abdicate.

## CHAPTER III

### PURITANISM UNDER CHARLES II.: AN OUTCAST

**I.** General Monk, the Commander of the English forces in Scotland, seeing his opportunity in the deadlock that now occurred, entered London on 3rd February, 1659, with 5000 men, and declared in favour of the Parliament as it was constituted before the expulsion of the Presbyterian members. The House so constituted once more affirmed Presbyterianism to be the established order of the Church of England, with an express toleration for tender consciences outside the national establishment.

But meanwhile Monk, seeing the tide running in favour of Charles, made his own terms with him, and procured and submitted to Parliament the famous "Breda Declaration" of Charles, that "no man shall be disquieted or called in question for difference of opinion in matters of religion which do not disturb the peace of the kingdom." Sir Matthew Hale and other Presbyterian members desired a clearer understanding on some matters, and sufficient guarantees, but they were overruled, and Charles was proclaimed on the 8th May 1660, and entered

London amid a pæan of welcome on the 29th of the same month. The nation which had bought its liberties with its blood at Marston Moor and Worcester, now drunk with Royalist frenzy, took back Charles practically "without conditions," and in mad infatuation gave itself back to worse than slavery.

**2. The Savoy Conference.**—In fulfilment of a promise, a Royal Commission was issued on March 25, 1661, appointing twelve bishops and twelve Presbyterian divines, with nine assistants on each side, to meet in the Savoy Palace in the Strand, with the professed object of effecting a settlement of the ecclesiastical question; but it turned out to be a mere pretence. The Presbyterian leaders, such as Baxter, Calamy, Reynolds, Manton, and Ashe, profiting by the blunders of the past, expressed their readiness to make large concessions, but it was soon apparent that no concession would be entertained, and that the Conference was as much a farce as the Hampton Court Conference at the opening of James's reign.

**3. The Worcester House Declaration.**—A Royal Declaration appeared, promising a large increase of suffragan bishops, permitting Presbyters to share in Episcopal Acts, and holding out the hope of a revision of the Prayer Book. But it was soon manifest that this Declaration had no serious purpose, and that it was simply given as an expedient to gain time.

**4. The Cavalier Parliament.**—All hopes of compromise were shattered by the new Parliament of 1661, known as the Cavalier or Pension Parliament, which was made up chiefly of young men who had no memory of the Stuart tyranny, and who are described by Pepys as “the most profane, swearing fellows that ever I heard in my life.” At the opening of the first Session every member was ordered to receive the Communion in the Anglican form ; the Solemn League and Covenant was burnt in Westminster ; the Act excluding bishops from the House of Lords was repealed ; and any alterations made in the Prayer-Book favoured sacerdotalism. The Corporation Act, which required a reception of the Communion according to the rites of Anglicanism, a renunciation of the Covenant, and a declaration that it was unlawful to take up arms against the King, was passed—a sinister attempt to drive Presbyterians from municipal office, the Corporations being strongholds of Presbyterians.

**5. Black Bartholomew's Day.**—But in the Act of Uniformity, passed in 1662, a still more deadly blow was aimed at them and others. That Act required all not episcopally ordained to be re-ordained ; it required them to declare their unfeigned assent and consent to everything in the Prayer-Book, including the Divine appointment of Prelacy, the sign of the cross in baptism, kneeling at Communion ; it required them to take the oath of canonical obedience, and to abjure the Solemn League and Covenant ;

and it inflicted severe penalties on those who observed any other form of worship. The 24th of August, 1662, St. Bartholomew's Day, the anniversary of the massacre of the Huguenots of France, was the last day allowed for refusal to comply with it. On that day the Nonconformist clergy were expelled from their livings; on that day some 2000 ministers—rectors and vicars—without any concert, surrendered their benefices, turned their backs on their pleasant parsonages, and cast themselves on the care of God, rather than violate their convictions. Of the men thus ejected, and of those left behind, the historian Green writes: "The rectors and vicars who were driven out were the most learned and active of their order. The bulk of the great livings throughout the country were in their hands. They stood at the head of the London clergy, as the London clergy stood in general repute at the head of their class throughout England. They occupied the higher posts at the two Universities. No English divine, save Jeremy Taylor, rivalled Howe as a preacher. No parson was so renowned as a controversialist, or so indefatigable as a parish priest as Baxter. And behind these men stood a fifth of the whole body of the clergy, men whose zeal and labour had diffused throughout the country a greater appearance of piety and religion than it had ever displayed before. But the expulsion of these men was far more to the Church of England than the loss of their individual services. It was the definite expulsion of a great party which from the time of the Reformation

had played the most active and popular part in the life of the Church. It was the close of an effort which had been going on ever since Elizabeth's accession to bring the English Communion into closer relations with the Reformed Communions of the Continent, and into greater harmony with the religious instincts of the nation at large. The Church of England stood from that moment isolated and alone among all the Churches of the Christian world. The Reformation had severed it irretrievably from those which still clung to the obedience of the Papacy. By its rejection of all but Episcopal orders the Act of Uniformity severed it as irretrievably from the general body of the Protestant Churches, whether Lutheran or Reformed. And while thus cut off from all healthy religious Communion with the world without, it sank into immobility within. With the expulsion of the Puritan clergy, all change, all efforts after reform, all rational development suddenly stopped. From that time to this the Episcopal Church has been unable to meet the varying spiritual needs of its adherents by any modification of its government or its worship. It stands alone among all the religious bodies of Western Christendom in its failure through 200 years to devise a single new service of prayer or praise."

**6. The Sufferings of the Ejected Clergy.**—Limits of space forbid us to dwell here on the cruel privations and sufferings of the ejected ministers. There was a spiteful refinement of cruelty in the day fixed for their

expulsion. It was immediately before the date when their year's tithes would be paid, so that the twelve-month's income due to those who had done the work fell to successors who had done nothing to earn it. And not content with expelling them in penury from their livings, the Parliament continued to pursue and harass them with its persecutions. The Act of Uniformity was followed in 1664 by the Conventicle Act, which inflicted severe penalties on all above the age of sixteen who attended private meetings of Nonconformists ; and what is known as the Clarendon Code was completed by the "Five Mile Act," which prohibited the ejected ministers from settling within five miles of any corporate town, and from acting as schoolmasters. The story of their sufferings as recorded in Calamy's "Account" of them, or in Palmer's 'Abridgement' of Calamy's work, and as they are related by Richard Baxter, would draw tears from the most callous.

**7. Charles II. Himself.**—No wonder that the reign thus inaugurated was the most shameful in the whole record of English history. And one of the most profligate and infamous of that disgraceful time was Charles himself. He was a man of considerable natural talent, shrewd, vivacious, and witty, pleasant and affable in manner. His apology to the courtiers around his deathbed that he was such an unconscionable time in dying was very characteristic ; and Rochester's epigram that he "never said a foolish thing, and never did a wise one" was not far from the mark. The one

thing in which he showed any real interest was the indulgence of his sensual pleasures, and the heaping of titles and rewards upon his mistresses and bastards. The vacant hours that could be spared from such engagements were given to gambling and drinking. While professing open hostility to the French King, Louis XIV., he was secretly in the pay of Louis, with a pension of £300,000 a year. As Macaulay puts it, "he was crowned in his youth with the Covenant in his hand, and died with the host sticking in his throat after a life of dawdling suspense between Hobbism and Popery." He said Presbyterianism was "no religion for a gentleman." Certainly it was no religion for a "gentleman" like Charles, and it is a valuable asset to be set down to its credit that Charles *could not be* a Presbyterian, though he had sworn allegiance to it.

**8. Puritanism Apparently Defeated but Really Victorious.**—The expulsion of the Puritans though at the time disastrous was in the long run fruitful in many good results for the nation and the world. The great Nonconformist bodies that in course of time formed and organised themselves outside the national establishment, and wrung from English statesmen and rulers the right to worship God as their conscience dictated, did probably a greater service to civil and religious liberty, and to other noble causes, than if they had remained within it.

(1) In due time, as we have seen, the principles of representative and Constitutional government for

which the Puritans contended found their way into the British Constitution, having been embodied in it at the Revolution Settlement. "In the Revolution of 1688," as Mr. S. R. Gardiner points out, "Puritanism did the work of civil liberty which it had failed to do in that of 1642." How this came about is very well explained by Dr. J. F. Bright in his *History of England*. He says (p. 538): "The agitations of the Reformation had given birth to Presbyterianism, or Church government by officers elected by the Congregation, as contrasted with government by divinely ordained priests, and thus even in the sphere of religion the idea of official representative government had begun to supplant the idea of authority based on Divine right. Then there arose the question—Is not the King, after all, instead of being the proprietor, an official? And if an official, whence is his authority derived if not from the source of all official authority, the people? Thus there arose in the place of territorial authority, or Divine right royalty, the idea of official royalty, depending on the will of the nation: in other words, of Constitutional royalty. The latter was the view held by the Puritan party, and later on by the Whig party, and most of the events which happened during the reign of the Stuart Kings were closely connected with this change of idea."

(2) In the great Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century, in which Whitefield and Wesley were the leading agents, the work of religious quickening and

reform, which was interrupted at the Restoration, was again resumed. In the evangelical school which then arose in the established Church, and in which men like William Romaine and Henry Venn, John Newton and Thomas Scott were prominent, there came about what has been called a revival of Puritanism in the Church of England itself. Thus "slowly but steadily," says Mr. S. R. Gardiner again, Puritanism "introduced its seriousness and purity into English society, English literature, English politics. The whole history of English progress since the Restoration, on its moral and spiritual sides, has been the history of Puritanism."

(3) As Professor Dowden points out, Puritanism "carried the genius of the Scriptures into the very heart and soul of England." How much not England alone, but all the English-speaking countries of the world, owe to the Bible, it would be hard to overestimate. It has brought them into closer contact with the spiritual and invisible world, and has thus tended to uplift them. In American phrase it has enabled them in some sense to "hitch their wagon to a star." As Professor Dowden has shown, in opposition to Matthew Arnold, the dominant idea of Puritanism was not dogma, but that "the relation between the invisible spirit of man and the invisible God was immediate rather than mediate." In emphasising this idea Puritanism has done much to liberate the human mind from priestly bondage and to elevate and ennable it.

(4) And, finally, in the inner essence of it Puritanism is still a living power in the world. In the great non-Anglican Evangelical Churches which exist and prosper to-day, in the Presbyterian, Congregational, Methodist, Baptist, and other communities, which far outnumber the members of the Anglican Communion, the traditions of Puritanism are still preserved and maintained. If some of its external forms and details have become obsolete, it is still alive and active in its spirit and essential principles.

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